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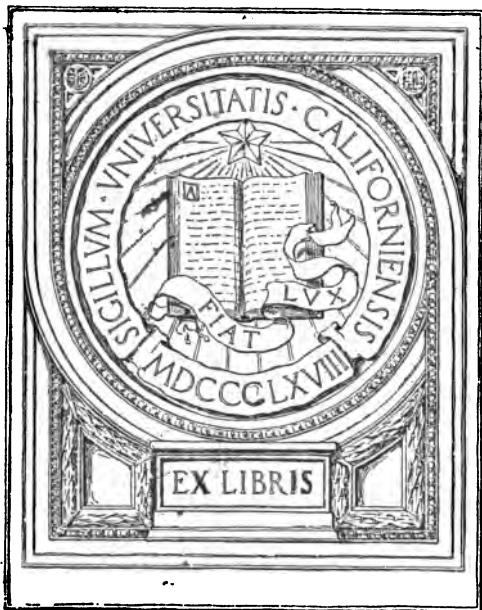
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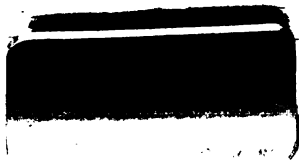
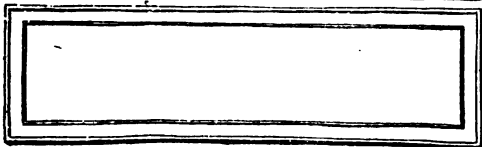
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**GREEK ART**

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*The Discobolos of Myron.*

# GREEK ART

BY

H. B. WALTERS

IN

WITH FORTY ILLUSTRATIONS



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## PREFACE

TO treat of such a subject as Greek Art within circumscribed limits is no easy task, when anything like a complete historical account of every branch of it is attempted. This is especially the case with the history of Greek sculpture, the material for which is now so enormous, and its importance so great, that it has been found necessary to adopt a method of selection of typical works and artists for each period, sufficient, it is hoped, for an adequate presentment of the achievements of the Greek sculptors. In the other chapters, which deal more with classes of monuments than with individual works, the author's object has been to give a brief outline of the development of each art, which may serve as an introduction to those who desire to know more of the subject. The illustrations have been selected as far as possible to represent the different periods in each case.

In regard to the vexed question of the spelling of Greek names, it is impossible to avoid inconsistency without incurring the charge of pedantry on the one hand, or running into manifest absurdities on the other. In the case of familiar names, such as Mycenae or Pericles, there seems to be no occasion for departing from tradition ; on the other hand, to speak of Cimon or Cypselos involves the risk of mispronunciation. To use Latin names for the Greek deities is at the present day an anachronism, and in all mere transliterations of Greek words the original spelling has been reproduced ; but in many cases the safest guide is the eye alone.

The author desires to express his acknowledgments to Prof. E. A. Gardner and Messrs. Macmillan and Co. for kind permission to use illustrations for Plates III., VI., IX., XIII., XIV., XVI., and XVII. ; to M. Collignon for the same for the Frontispiece, from his *Hist. de la Sculpt. Grecque* ; and to the Council of the Hellenic Society for the use of illustrations of vases, Plates XXVII.-XXIX.

H. B. W.

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# GREEK ART

## CHAPTER I

### THE BEGINNINGS OF GREEK ART

Early Greek Art and recent discoveries—Civilisation of Bronze Age—The Mycenaean people—Early remains of Troy and the Greek Islands—Crete and Minos—Mycenae and its remains—Metal-work and painting—Literary traditions—Art in Homer—The chest of Kypselos—Oriental influence (Egypt, Assyria, Phoenicia).

THE Greeks themselves seem to have held exceedingly vague and uncritical notions about the origin of their art, as of their early history in general, and the statements of ancient writers on the subject must be used with the greatest caution. Until about thirty years ago modern scholars were almost equally in the dark, and although the value of the study of archaeology for the interpretation of history had begun to receive adequate recognition, poverty of material afforded little for the student to work upon beyond the literary traditions and

the evidence of Homer and other writers. Now, however, all is different, and such a flood of light has been thrown upon the remains of pre-historic Greece by the marvellous discoveries of the last thirty years that we are in a fair way not only to co-ordinate and properly estimate the literary evidence, but even to reconstruct the social and political history of the lands bordering on the Aegean in the "Dark Ages" previous to the dawn of history.

The chief merit of this great transformation is due to Heinrich Schliemann and his laudable ambitions, which, triumphing over innumerable obstacles, enabled him to lay bare some of the most famous ancient sites, to recover treasures sufficient to stock more than one museum, and to supply materials for study which even now are hardly exhausted. That Schliemann was something of a visionary, and claimed for his discoveries rather more than was justifiable, does not indeed detract from their value. We may not be able to see in the tombs of Mycenae, as he did, the burial-place of Agamemnon and his compeers, or to accept his theories as to the city of Troy and the palace of Priam; but he has largely enabled us to reconstruct the civilisation of which Homer has given us but a vague and shadowy description, and in some

measure to sift the historical from the legendary and fact from tradition.

We find, then, that covering the period from 2500 to about 900 B.C. there exist all over the Mediterranean extensive traces of a civilisation coincident with the Bronze Age in that part of the world, and showing a course of development from pure copper implements and rude pottery up to a stage of really advanced art and extended commerce. At a certain point this civilisation suddenly disappears, or at least only lingers on in isolated spots, and is succeeded by a new but much more rudimentary civilisation corresponding with the beginning of the Iron Age. It is this latter date which marks the beginning of Greek art proper, in so far as a connected development can be traced from this time onwards up to the Highest Period of Art.

But in the light of the new discoveries we can no longer say that Greek art or Greek civilisation begins at this particular point. Even Horace was ready to admit that "there were brave men before Agamemnon," and we know now that Homer does not represent the earliest phases of life in Greek lands. It is not a settled question how far this early civilisation is entitled to be called Greek, and

many theories of its origin have been promulgated by scholars. From the fact that Mycenae has been shown by Schliemann's discoveries to have been one of its chief centres, and has so far yielded more extensive results than any other region, the name of "Mycenaean" was given to this civilisation and its art, and, though no more than a conventional expression, has become current coin in the language both of scholars and of the wider circle of students in general.

It must be borne in mind that this term does not attempt to define either the period, the centre of industry, or the racial affinities of this people; but whether we regard them as Greeks or not, at all events they occupied the same geographical area that subsequently constituted Greece, and certainly represent the inhabitants of that region in the Bronze Age. Attempts have been made to identify them with the Pelasgians, the race which according to Greek tradition formed the original inhabitants of many parts of Greece, such as Attica, Arcadia, and Thessaly; and no doubt this theory contains a measure of truth. But the generally accepted view is that the people were Achaeans, the name given by Homer to the Greeks who fought against Troy, and that

Mycenae therefore represents the capital and abode of the wealthy Achaean princes (typified by Agamemnon).

The remarkable upheaval which tended to submerge this Mycenaean or Achaean power, forcing on Greece the necessity of learning anew the alphabet of her art, is generally held to be coincident with the Dorian invasion, traditionally placed about 1100 B.C. These Dorians originally came from the plains of Central Europe, whence they crossed the Balkans and settled first in the mountain fastnesses of Central Greece. Becoming more powerful they suddenly made a southward move and possessed themselves of the Peloponnesus, driving out the Achaeans, who sought refuge on the coast of Asia Minor and in Cyprus. A rude, uncultured race, as the history of their Spartan descendants shows, they brought with them a simple and elementary form of art, which made its influence felt in the pottery of several succeeding centuries. The dispersion of the Mycenaean culture in Greece seems to have been complete, and only scattered traces remained to influence here and there the art of the new race.

It now remains to summarise briefly the characteristics of this Mycenaean civilisation.

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Undoubtedly the earliest remains are those of Troy, the islands of the Cyclades in the Aegean, Crète, and Cyprus. Dr. Schliemann, who investigated Troy shortly before his death, and his successor Dr. Dörpfeld, discovered traces of no less than nine different settlements in successive layers, ranging from about 2500 B.C. to Roman times. The first and lowest contained rude Neolithic remains, the second, which Schliemann erroneously supposed to be the Homeric Troy, remains of a more advanced but still primitive character, including simple bronze implements and plain pottery. As regards the latter, the prevailing idea of the artist seems to have been to combine as far as possible the fictile and plastic arts, by giving to the vase the semblance of a human form. This was a principle never lost sight of in minor Greek art, and in some measure maintained to the present day, when we speak of the "neck," "body," "shoulder," or "foot" of a vessel. But of painted decoration or of sculptured images there is as yet no sign.

On the other hand, in the Cycladic islands we find painted vases of a remarkably advanced type, and rude sculptured images of marble. The former were found in Santorin

(Thera), and appear to be the remains of a very ancient civilisation overwhelmed by a volcanic eruption which is dated by geologists about 2000 B.C. These earliest examples of painted vases are ornamented with vegetable patterns of a remarkably naturalistic type, and sometimes even with figures of animals.

The earliest remains of the island of Cyprus present a strong parallelism with those of Troy, and are probably contemporary with them, *i.e.* not later than 2000 B.C. The tombs contain weapons of pure copper, which point to a time before the admixture of tin necessary to produce bronze had been discovered. Cyprus was always famous in antiquity for its copper mines, and it is possible that the working of that metal (and afterwards of bronze) was first established in that island and spread thence over the Mediterranean. The pottery resembles that of Troy both in forms and appearance, the decoration being limited to geometrical patterns of lines engraved with a knife while the clay was soft. For some centuries Cyprus preserved a high level of civilisation compared with other countries, but it afterwards shows a tendency to lag behind, remaining content to imitate and combine the features of Greek and Oriental art.

Lastly, in Crete we find traces of a very early civilisation, the pottery resembling in its decoration that of Thera, but more advanced. The seals and engraved stones, of which such numbers have been recently discovered by Mr. Arthur Evans, not only bear signs of a very high antiquity, but are specially interesting from the characters engraved upon them, indicative of a far earlier system of writing than had hitherto been supposed to exist in Greek lands.

Since the island has been laid open to the excavator by recent political changes, a great work has been done by Mr. Arthur Evans and other explorers in laying bare the ancient sites. At Knossos, the old capital, Mr. Evans has unearthed the greater part of a vast palace of several stories, which represents the abode of the early Mycenaean rulers of the island, about the sixteenth century B.C. According to Greek legend, embodied in the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, the great ruler of Crete, who extended his dominion over the neighbouring islands and even the mainland of Asia Minor, was Minos, the father of the monstrous Minotaur, for whom he built the famous labyrinth. Whether or no Minos ever existed, we may yet see in this palace the abode of

Cretan sovereignty during this period of extended dominion. The island is rich in remains of Mycenaean art, such as engraved gems, painted vases, and the extraordinarily realistic fresco-paintings which adorned the walls of the Knossian palace.

It was, however, ere long destined to be overshadowed by a rising power of great commercial importance and equal artistic genius, which had its centre at Mycenae and in the neighbouring palace of Tiryns. The excavation of the latter by Dr. Schliemann has thrown a vivid light on the Homeric descriptions of chieftains' houses, and we may see the whole plan of the palace laid bare, with every room and court distinct, and the wonderful subterranean galleries of "Cyclopean" masonry; but at Mycenae the remains, even at the present day, are far more remarkable. To view the earliest the traveller must ascend the hill on which the fortress was built and pass through the famous Lion Gate, which has stood from time immemorial almost intact, even surviving the general destruction in the fifth century B.C. Within the gate is the Agora, or place of the Council, with its circular stone benches on which the Achaean chiefs sat to deliberate, just as Homer describes them.

This circle encloses the shaft-graves from which Schliemann obtained a magnificent array of gold ornaments now displayed in the Museum at Athens, together with quantities of painted pottery and other objects. The ornaments consist mainly of gold plates with *repoussé* designs of butterflies, spirals, and other patterns, and masks of thin gold leaf which were placed over the faces of the corpses. Whoever may have been the occupants of these tombs, their belongings certainly show that the Homeric epithet for Mycenae, "abounding in gold," was fully justified.

The Lion Gate (Plate I.), as the oldest architectural monument existing in Greece, and as the prototype of Doric architecture, calls for additional description. The lintel is formed of one huge block of stone, above which rears a slim column tapering downwards and crowned with a flat round capital with a band of spherical ornaments at the neck. This is flanked by two supporters in the form of lions modelled with considerable accuracy and spirit, the whole forming a heraldic group of Oriental type. Lower down the hillside stand the famous beehive tombs, known from time immemorial as the Treasure-house or tomb of Atreus and the tomb of Clytemnestra. The former was

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THE LION GATE AT MYCENÆ







PART OF IVORY BOX FROM ENKOMI, CYPRUS

adorned with bronze plating and cornices of blue enamel such as are described by Homer.

Mycenaean art shows its highest level in the minor arts of painting, gem-engraving, and metal-work : sculpture properly so called and architecture were as yet in a rudimentary condition. At Enkomi, in Cyprus, which site may represent the original settlement of Teucer in the new Salamis after the Trojan War, a marvellous and most varied series of gold ornaments has been found, many with *repoussé* designs of an advanced type or rich enamel decoration ; ivories with exquisitely carved figures of animals (Plate II.) ; and porcelain vases in the form of human or animal heads, rivalling the fictile vases of a much later period of Greek art. The frescoes of Tiryns and Knossos are remarkable for their naturalism and power of rendering not only animal but even human forms ; and the same skill is reflected in varying degree in the engraved gems. A fragment of a chased silver vase, found in 1890 at Mycenae, gives a remarkably spirited and realistic representation of a sortie from a besieged town, with slingers and other combatants, and there is a series of double-handled cups of gold which are thought to represent the famous cup of Nestor, described in the

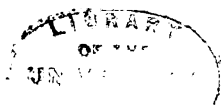
*Iliad.* But all these are surpassed by the extraordinary gold cups found at Vaphio, near Sparta (Plate III.), with their exquisite and life-like chased designs representing the capture of bulls. They form a work of art hardly surpassed by the products of any nation at any epoch. Nor should we omit to call attention to the painted vases with their remarkable repertory of marine subjects, such as the cuttlefish, the nautilus, or various forms of seaweed, often drawn with a naturalism and eye for form and detail worthy of the best Japanese craftsmen (Plate IV.).

So far we have been dealing with actual remains of the primitive period found on Greek soil, which throw far more light on this period than any literary record or tradition, even than Homer. But the study of archæology from this aspect alone tends to become one-sided, and it is always necessary to see to what extent the literary records have been justified by these discoveries.

It has almost become a truism, as a result of modern research in various directions, that all tradition, however mythical in appearance, has a substratum of fact at its basis. In the case of the Greeks there were not only visible remains extant in the historical period which



THE VAPHIO GOLD CUPS

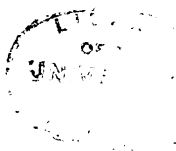




PAINTED MYCENAEAN POTTERY

*From Baumeister*

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they desired to account for but found themselves unable, but there were also religious rites and ceremonies of a mysterious and sometimes barbarous character. From these two causes there arose a legendary history and an elaborate scheme of mythology, by means of which the remains were attributed to mythical persons and details of ritual were explained. Thus the huge structures of Tiryns and Mycenae were attributed to the giant race of Cyclopes who came from Lycia and built walls for the local princes, whence this particular form of masonry with its enormous shapeless blocks has ever since borne the name of "Cyclopean." It was also believed that these fabulous and quasi-supernatural beings were specially skilled in metal-work, and hence the Greek stories of the Dactyli in Crete, and the Heliadae in Rhodes, who made images of men and animals that moved about the highways.

In the domain of sculpture, the first efforts were centred round the supposed personality of Daedalus (the name denoting a skilled artificer); whom even the Greeks hardly recognised as a historical personage. It was said that he was the first who "made statues to walk," in the sense that he was the first who achieved

the feat of distinguishing the legs from the body and from each other. We shall see later that this represents a distinct stage in the development of early Greek art. In later times he came to be associated exclusively with sculpture, impersonating its primitive efforts. The old traveller Pausanias, seeing the rude images worshipped in some Greek temples and traditionally attributed to Daedalus, gave vent to the shrewd observation that "the works of Daedalus may indeed be uncouth to the eye, but there is some trace of divine inspiration in them." Herein lies the secret of Greek art, the "something divine" which underlies all its early helplessness.

A question which though it has often been the subject of academic discussion, is none the less of general interest, is that of the relation of the Mycenaean civilisation to that described in Homer, *i.e.* of the Achæan people as he represents them. It has been noted that in several important points such as methods of burial, men's armour, and women's costumes there are wide discrepancies between the Homeric descriptions and the archæological evidence; whereas in other matters the parallelism is most closely marked. The most satisfactory solution of the difficulty

seems to be—admitting that the Mycenaean civilisation is to be regarded as Achæan—that Homer really reflects two states of society—that of his own day, and that of the period which he describes—either from tradition or from imagination.

And as with the civilisation, so with the works of art which he describes. It is no doubt true to a great extent that his accounts are based upon the works of art of his own day. On the other hand, some allowance must be made for poetic imagination and for the possibility that he is depicting traditional glories of the past, perhaps as reflected in heirlooms preserved to his time. It is however possible, with some reservation, to utilise the evidence he affords for the state of Greek art at the opening of the historic period.

Among these works some are purely mythical, such as the “automata” of Hephaestos (*Il.*, xviii.), or the golden youths in the palace of Alkinoos (*Od.*, vi.); but the houses of gold and bronze like those of Menelaos and Alkinoos in the *Odyssey* have counterparts in actual historical fact, and the methods of decoration with bronze plates and cornices of blue enamel find parallels in Mycenaean buildings. Of sculpture in the round there is

curiously enough no mention, nor yet of engraved gems or painted pottery, though both must have been well known in his time ; but there is more than one description of small but elaborate objects in metal-work, such as the brooch of Odysseus, representing a dog killing a fawn, or the shoulder-belt of Herakles, which find analogies both in Oriental art and in the engraved gems and bronze reliefs of early Greece.

The shield of Achilles (*Il.*, xviii.) is by far the most important work described by Homer. In form and general construction it differs nothing from real objects, and even the decoration must be in some measure a reflection of what the poet had actually seen ; but the elaborate composition and the extraordinary number of figures find no real analogies in contemporary art, and we are almost prepared for the mythical element by the circumstances of its supernatural production in the workshop of the god.

The arrangement of the designs was intended to represent the universe, with the encircling ocean ; the inner scenes are all from daily life, not from mythology. It would appear that the figures were not conceived as in relief, but as inlaid in different metals, as

variations of colour are mentioned. Even though the themes are largely borrowed from foreign types, we may well believe that the conceptions of the poet's imagination embodied the truly Greek spirit.

Although in Homer we find such an advanced stage of artistic conception, yet there is no doubt that during the period covered by these poems, Greek art, as yet slowly recovering from the upheaval of the Dorian invasion, was in a very rudimentary stage, especially as regards sculpture. In the pottery of the age immediately succeeding the Mycenaean the vigorous and lifelike designs of animals and plants are replaced by the simple geometrical patterns characteristic of an uncultivated race. Mechanical as these are, they yet show some signs of a taste for symmetry and artistic arrangement; but the animal and human representations, which by an almost universal artistic law appear in successive stages of development, are for a long time rudimentary and almost childish in their treatment. Among other minor branches of art, figures in bronze and terra-cotta stand on the same level as the sculpture on a larger scale, while the engraved gems preserve all the characteristics of the Mycenaean age.

The traveller Pausanias has recorded for us a description of two ancient works of art, which, though considerably later in date, have generally been regarded as the culmination of the series of great decorative works which began with the shield of Achilles. His descriptions are so full that by comparison with existing monuments we are able to arrive at a tolerably satisfactory restoration in each case, and thus to picture to ourselves the general appearance of what were considered the masterpieces of their time.

These two monuments are the chest of Kypselos and the throne of Apollo at Amyclae. The first-named stood in the temple of Hera at Olympia, as part of the offerings dedicated by the Kypselid tyrants of Corinth about the beginning of the sixth century, and was the work of artists of that city; there is however no reason for connecting it with the chest in which, according to the story, the child Kypselos was hidden. It was constructed of cedar-wood, and the figures were wrought partly in ivory, partly in gold, and partly in the wood itself. The ornamentation was divided into five friezes, the middle one representing the meeting of two armies; the upper one had only two subjects—the wedding of Peleus

and Thetis and Herakles' combat with the Centaurs. The remaining friezes were divided up into groups, all mythological or personifications of a religious nature; and herein we perceive a great contrast with the earlier shield of Achilles, on which the subjects were all taken from daily life. The figures were identified by means of inscriptions.

The throne at Amyclae (near Sparta) was constructed and decorated by Bathycles, an artist of Magnesia in Asia Minor, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Croesus (about 560-550 B.C.); but Pausanias' description of this work is much more meagre than that of the chest, and no restoration is possible beyond that of its general arrangement. The statue of the god which surmounted the throne was of a very primitive type, columnar in form and of colossal size. The pedestal and throne were adorned with reliefs and allegorical figures, belonging to the Ionian school of art.

In connection with early Greek art an important question arises as to the extent of its dependence upon Oriental influences. The tendency at one time was to attribute all early Greek art to Oriental sources, but of late the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction,

largely owing to the influence which the Mycenaean finds have exercised upon students.

On one point at least the caution cannot be too strongly impressed upon the casual visitor to a museum, namely that conclusions must not be based upon a superficial similarity in the character of all early art. It has been said that "all children draw Assyrian," and in the same way the family likeness of all rudimentary art is due to a physiological cause, the universal sameness of human nature. This accounts for the curious resemblance that has been traced between early Greek pottery and that of savage or half-civilised races like the Peruvians or Kabyles of North Africa. It has been shrewdly remarked by a writer on Greek art that the Greeks borrowed the alphabet of art from the East in order to write their own language, just as they borrowed that of writing, and if we investigate this statement more closely we shall see that it denotes the use of a system of conventionalities (just as letters are conventional signs) to express living forms in marble, bronze, or other material. Let us then endeavour to see what use the Greeks actually did make of the lessons they learned from their neighbours.

The earliest remains of Egyptian art, up to about 3000 B.C., display a marvellous capacity of rendering natural forms and a technical skill almost impossible for us to comprehend. But this early art was banished before the time had come when it could influence Greece. Next comes the period of the Ramses and other kings who produced the colossal sculptural and architectural monuments which represent the height of Egyptian power and magnificence. This coincides with the Mycenaean period in Greece, and although there are evidences of importations in both directions, it cannot be said that Mycenaean art reflects the character of Egyptian except in isolated instances. It is not indeed until the twenty-sixth dynasty under the great Psammetichus (664-610) and his successor Amasis that the relations of Egypt and Greece assume an historical character. But this is a time when Greek art had emerged from the primitive stage and was well on its way to full development. Egyptian art of the seventh century was however of a refined and delicate character, more like that of the earliest dynasties, and its perfected technique and elaborate system of conventionalities to overcome difficulties did not come too late to supply the now rising art of Greek

sculpture with the required "alphabet." By this time the Greek artist had no lack of ideas, but he was still at a loss how to express them.

With the other great Oriental nation, Assyria, relations were, if not so direct, of a similar kind. Assyrian art was always highly developed in its own line, manifested principally in the magnificent reliefs of Nimrod and Nineveh (Kouyounjik). But its influence was not felt quite in the same way. It was not so much to the technical methods of Assyria as to the subjects of its decorative art that the Greeks were indebted. The lions, horses, and fantastic winged monsters of the Assyrian reliefs, and the ornamentation of textile embroideries, provided many models which the Greeks were ready to adopt, and supplied them with creations which always remained popular themes of decoration. As in Egypt, historical relations between the two countries can hardly have taken place earlier than the time of Sargon (eighth century B.C.), and even then they were hardly direct.

The people who acted as intermediaries seem to have been the geographically intervening race of the Phoenicians, whose art, it must be remembered, was not a source, but a channel of influence. Their works of art were made for

purely commercial purposes, and are found in many other parts of the Mediterranean—in Cyprus, Sardinia, Etruria, but rarely in Phoenicia. Further, such genuine products of Phoenician art are mostly of late date—not earlier than the seventh century B.C.—and they are distinguished by their curious combination, without blending, of Assyrian and Egyptian elements. Their influence is strongest in Cyprus during the period 800–500 B.C., especially in the sculpture and many of the terra-cotta figures of that island; but Cypriote art always preserved some measure of independence, and is not at any time purely Phoenician. The Homeric poems, especially the *Odyssey*, throw some light on the dealings of the Phoenician traders with Greece, and no doubt they had settlements in the Aegean, at Cameiros in Rhodes, and elsewhere, as is shown by finds of imported objects, such as glass vessels. But the rapid rise of Greek commerce in the sixth century drove the Phoenicians from the Aegean, and with their withdrawal to the western Mediterranean they are lost sight of altogether.

The result of this extension of Greek commerce is that artistic communities spring up in all parts of the Mediterranean, each with its own school of art. In Cyprus, in Asia Minor, in

Sicily, at Naukratis in Egypt, and at Cyrene on the north coast of Africa, as in less important centres, the same features of independent centres for the production or collection of objects of art are to be observed, not less than in the chief towns and islands of Greece proper. The history of Greek art in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. is the history of the gradual coalescence of the different schools and their final absorption under the growing and all-pervading power and influence of Athens.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE

Early cult images—Adherence to conventional types—Athlete statues—Technical inventions—The Dorian and Ionian schools of sculpture—Argos—Athens—The Aeginetan school.

THE rude and primitive representations of deities which first served the Greeks as statues in their temples, and were often preserved from motives of reverence, hardly deserve to be regarded as works of sculpture. They have, however, a claim upon our consideration, in spite of the absence of artistic feeling, as the first attempts at the embodiment of divinity in a concrete form for purposes of worship. In some temples a mere fetish, in the form of a conical stone or *baetylos*, as at Paphos, or a log of wood without any attempt at organic form or ornamentation sufficed, its special sanctity being due to the supposed fact of its having fallen from heaven, or to some other mysterious association. It

was not until some advance had been made in the mastery over technical processes that art was enlisted in the service of religion.

The primitive wooden figures which served as cult-images were known as *xoana*, meaning "hewn objects"; they were in fact mere tree-trunks with the rudest possible indication of facial features or arms, and a plain round base in place of the lower members. Judging from the finds of terra-cotta figures on some primitive sites, as in Cyprus, it is probable that clay was largely used for smaller images of votive character, and that the primitive potter deliberately modelled these in the manner of the wooden figures. So too when marble first came into use, the columnar form was the type consistently adopted for the first attempts at statues; and an example in bronze is furnished by the Apollo of Amyclae mentioned in the last chapter. Another variety of form was that of a board-like figure, cut in a flat, almost rectangular shape instead of a cylindrical one; but this is more usually found in clay than in marble.

We now, however, enter upon a period when the artistic instincts of the Greeks begin to make themselves felt, as an adjunct to their religious beliefs; and we shall see how their

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 27

early productions, however rude and helpless, nevertheless always show signs of the struggle after perfection which Pausanias descried in the works he attributes to Daedalus. The generally-received date for the earliest existing sculptures in Greece is the beginning of the sixth century B.C., and we may regard the limits of the archaic or progressive period as extending from 600 B.C. to 480 or 460 B.C., a period of about 130 years. Although the difference is so vast between works executed about the time of these respective limits, the development is on the whole so uniform and regular that the whole may conveniently be treated as one period. The advance of Greek sculpture proceeds on different lines from that of architecture and painting, the time of its perfection being midway between those of the other two arts; while the minor decorative arts develop far more rapidly than the higher branches, owing to the different circumstances under which they were produced, and also to their being more under foreign influences.

A prominent feature of early Greek art in general, and not least of its sculpture, is the tendency to adopt and adhere closely to certain *types*, limited in number, but offering in the issue adequate scope for development of style.

A study of any representative collection of archaic terra-cotta figures will show that a large proportion of them are conceived in one or two forms: *a draped figure, standing or seated*. From such figures we can form a fair idea of the limitations of the sixth-century sculptor. In the earliest examples the influence of the *xoana* or column-figures is still to be observed; the arms are rudimentary and the lower limbs are not distinguished; but gradually as the features are modelled with more and more success, the arms and legs become more and more distinctly formed, and at last stand out free from the body or from the drapery. Thus it was that Daedalus "made his statues to walk," as the old tradition went. In the treatment of the drapery the same gradual advance is to be observed from flat wooden-like masses up to sharply-defined and gracefully-falling folds.

Among the smaller figures, which are largely of a votive character, male types are curiously rare; but in life-size statues they are found almost as commonly as the female, only with this difference, that the male figures are almost invariably nude. This is an important point, because it betokens a new invention on the part of the Greeks. The feeling of early times

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 29

was strongly opposed to the nude in art, especially among the Oriental peoples, and it was so to a great extent in Greece. The adoption of the nude in art must therefore be due to some special cause, which we no doubt find in the Greek athletic games. When we read that athletes appeared nude at Olympia as early as 720 B.C., and Thucydides tells us that the custom had become universal by his day, we can understand how the principle became accepted in art. There is a series of statues of the nude male type, showing various stages of artistic development, which are usually identified as "Apollo"; but it is extremely doubtful whether they are intended to represent that god. Indeed there are equally good grounds for regarding them as representations, if not portraits, of athletes. It is probable that the first statue of an athlete of which we have literary record, that of Arrhachion set up at Phigaleia in 564 B.C., was of similar character. At all events we may see in this series of figures a distinct attempt to express anatomical details and reproduce typical well-developed male figures.

We may now turn briefly to the literary evidence for the art of this period, which we shall find to be chiefly in the form of traditions

that this or that artist was the inventor of some particular process or new type. Unfortunately these traditions are very vague and untrustworthy, and they must be used with the utmost caution. All that they really tell us is that certain artists attained to excellence or showed originality in some particular branch of art.

The most interesting traditions recorded by the writers on art are those relating to technical discoveries in different materials. More than one writer has told the story of Butades of Corinth, who is said to have discovered the art of modelling in clay by filling in the outline of her lover's face which his daughter had traced in silhouette against a wall. But the same invention is ascribed to Theodoros and Rhoecos of Samos, who were also said to have invented the method of casting bronze statues on a hollow core. For this purpose clay models would be necessary. The true version is that clay had been used from very early times for figures, and that when bronze statues ceased to be cast solid (as the early ones were), clay was naturally utilised as stated. The art of welding iron was attributed to Glaucos of Chios; and lastly, schools of artists are mentioned in Crete,





NIKE (VICTORY) FROM DELOS

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 31

Chios, and Naxos who made great advances in the art of carving in marble. Some of these sculptors are described as pupils of Daedalus.

Theodoros and Rhoecos of Samos, whose date seems to be about 560-540 B.C., were apparently representatives of a very important school, and numerous legends have gathered round their name. It is at all events most probable that they mark the time when the old method of casting statues in solid bronze was given up, and the new one of casting them hollow from clay models introduced, a process which has held the field almost exclusively up to the present day.

The sculptor Archermos of Chios is said to have been the first to represent Nike (Victory) with wings, and as we are told that he made statues for the island of Delos, it is possible to associate with him a remarkable early statue found there, which represents a winged female figure (Plate V.). It is represented with face and body to the front, but kneeling sideways on the left knee; this, however, is only a convention of archaic art to indicate "rapid sideways motion." Although many of the details such as the treatment of the hair are crude and conventional, yet the conception

betokens great originality and advanced execution.

The list of names of sixth-century sculpture recorded by ancient writers might be extended, but is little more than a catalogue. It will therefore be found more profitable to turn from the literary records to the existing monuments, most of which are indeed quite recent discoveries; from them alone can we learn the true characteristics and capabilities of sixth-century sculpture. The different sites on which sculptures have been found fall into two main groups, corresponding to the two races between which Greece was roughly divided—the Dorians and the Ionians. Some of the sculptures are doubtless the product of infinitely organised schools.

The Dorian race extended its influence over the Peloponnesus as far as Megara, Crete, and parts of northern and central Greece such as Boeotia, as well as the highly-cultured island of Sicily with its important colonies; under the heading of Ionian art are included the coast of Asia Minor and the adjacent islands, together with the other islands of the Aegean, Thessaly, and last, but not least, Athens.

A typical work of the Dorian schools of the Peloponnese is the so-called Apollo of Tenos.

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 33

of the series of standing male figures which, as we have seen, perhaps represent athletes. This statue, now at Munich, appears to have stood over a grave; it is in excellent preservation and admirably executed both in proportions and details. The so-called "archaic smile," which is generally to be observed on the countenance of an early Greek statue, is here very much accentuated. The meaning of this expression has been disputed; it has been urged that it indicates the pleasurable effect the artist wished his work to have upon the spectator; but it is perhaps only an attempt at giving expression to the face. Although the slimness of this figure is very pronounced, there is a remarkable amount of success in the rendering of the anatomical details.

From Boeotia we have several "Apollos" of the same type as that from Tenea. One was found at Orchomenos, the others at the temple of Apollo Ptoös. It seems therefore probable that these latter figures are really Apollos; but the same type must have been used both for the god and for the athlete. The Orchomenos figure is much less advanced than the others, has no smile, and is generally heavier and stiffer.

The only other Dorian site that need be mentioned here is that of Selinus in Sicily, famous for its six great Doric temples (see Chap. V.). From these temples a series of sculptured *metopes* of various dates has been obtained; in all, four different sets ranging from the beginning of the sixth down to the fourth century. The earliest consists of three separate reliefs, representing the slaying of Medusa by Perseus, the capture of two brigands by Herakles, and a four-horse chariot. The Perseus relief is singularly uncouth and barbarous, and in this and the Herakles scene there is a considerable appeal to a sense of humour, probably, however, entirely unconscious. While the upper parts of the figures are in full face, the legs are in profile, and the proportions of the figures are generally very heavy, with abnormally large heads. The chariot scene is probably copied from engraved bronze work; although more advanced in style than the other two, the necessity of rendering it in front view seems to have caused the artist no little difficulty. The second set of metopes, found in 1892, shows considerable advance, and the effect is much more pleasing; one of the subjects, Europa riding on the bull (Plate VI.), is a



**METOPÉ FROM SELINUS : EUROPA ON BULL**



## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 35

particularly spirited, not to say charming, piece of work. The third set belongs strictly to the fifth century, but is still of an archaic character; one slab represents a fallen giant with some force of detail but without the virility that we look for at that date.

Among the monuments that may be placed in the category of Ionian art, those of Asia Minor claim a foremost place. As the heirs of Mycenaean culture the Greeks of the coast of Asia Minor, especially those in the cities and islands of Ionia proper, were during the archaic period always comparatively advanced. This is exemplified not only by their sculpture but by their architecture and painting, of which we shall treat in succeeding chapters. Among their sculptors was Bathycles of Magnesia, who was invited to Laconia to make the great throne of Apollo at Amyclae. In Ionia itself there were two great centres of worship, both of which have been explored for the British Museum—the temple of Apollo at Branchidae, near Miletus, and that of Artemis at Ephesus. The chief remains from Branchidae are a series of seated statues which lined the Sacred Way leading to the temple. By means of dedicatory inscriptions they may be dated about 550 B.C. They are almost the earliest examples we have

in marble of the "seated" type, and their primitive character is illustrated by the effect the figures give of being all of one piece with their seats. The drapery, too, is exceedingly flat and heavy, but some are more advanced in style than others.

The earlier temple at Ephesus was built in the middle of the sixth century, and several of the columns, as we learn from Herodotus, were given by King Croesus. One of these columns, adorned with sculptured reliefs, which has now been restored at the British Museum, bears an inscription recording the fact, and can thus be dated about 555 B.C., slightly earlier than Branchidae. But the style is much more advanced, and the full, rounded forms and somewhat sensuous character of the figures illustrate the tendency to luxury and softness of the Ionian race at that time.

The influence of the Ionian school is also seen as far south as Lycia, in the so-called Harpy Tomb, brought from Xanthus to the British Museum (Plate VII.). It is sculptured with reliefs on the four sides, mostly of a sepulchral character; the main subject on each side is that of worshippers bringing offerings to the enthroned dead; while at the corners are monsters with human heads and birds' wings.



**"HAPPY" MONUMENT: NORTH SIDE**



## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 37

carrying off the souls of the deceased (represented as small female figures). These death demons were formerly known as Harpies, whence the name of the tomb ; but both the art-type of the Harpy and its associations in Greek beliefs were of an entirely different character, and the figures convey no idea of violence or rapacity, answering more to the Christian angel. The style of the reliefs bears out what has already been said of those from Ephesus, but the general effect is admirable. The date is probably about 520 B.C.

Of the Aegean islands several have yielded interesting examples of archaic art, including some typical examples of *xoana* from Samos and Naxos. There is also a tombstone at Athens with a relief representing the deceased man playing with a dog, which dates about 480 B.C., and is a very graceful piece of work. The inscription on the base runs : "Alxenor the Naxian made me ; only look !" Melos and Naxos have yielded "Apollo" figures which may profitably be compared with those from Boeotia, in order to note the distinctions between the Aegean and mainland schools. A marked peculiarity of these island statues is the tendency to work in planes parallel to the front and sides and at right angles to

one another, producing a sort of rectangular section, with a general flatness of surface and angularity of outline, compared with the rounded forms of Boeotia. From Delos, a great centre for dedications, comes a similar series of female figures or "Artemis" types, forming a counterpart to the "Apollos" in style and subject.

We have reserved for final consideration three schools of art which are of special importance as leading up to the ultimate development and perfecting of sculpture in the fifth century—those of Athens, Aegina, and Argos (with Sikyon). Of these Athens has of late years attained an overwhelming importance by reason of the wonderful discoveries on the Acropolis, which are mostly products of local art, and present a complete series of examples extending over nearly a hundred years. These sculptures owe their preservation to an event which, though disastrous to Athens, has been most fortunate for us. When after the Persian invasion of 480 B.C. the surface of the Acropolis was covered with the débris of broken statues, the whole of these were utilised to form a foundation for the new buildings and other works of art, and were preserved almost uninjured below the surface until the spade of

the excavator in 1885-9 penetrated down to the living rock and brought all these marvellous treasures to light.

Among them is a series of sculptures executed in a soft limestone or calcareous tufa known to the Greeks as *poros*-stone, the surface of which was always painted, as was the case with terra-cotta statues in Italy. The colouring, though now very imperfectly preserved, was remarkably brilliant and varied, including brick-red, flesh-colour, light blue, dark blue, and green. This is the more remarkable as such a manifold scheme of colouring is otherwise unknown in early art; on the vases the only colour used is a red varying from brown to purple, and blue and green are never found. It is only on the terra-cotta figures and vases of the fifth century that they first appear, and even great painters were slow to adopt more than a limited number.

The remains of these sculptures show that they are from pedimental groups of a temple, and they are therefore the earliest examples that we possess, except the Selinus metopes, of architectural sculpture. They appear to have come from old buildings on the Acropolis, which cannot now be identified. The subjects represented are the labours of Herakles, such

as his combats with the hydra, with Triton, "the old man of the sea," and with the giant Typhon, whose body terminated in that of a serpent. The latter has three heads, all of which are well preserved, but present to us a somewhat grotesque appearance with their bright red faces, bright blue beards, and half-humorous expression. It should be noted that in each case the serpentine or piscine body of the monster with its tapering coils is admirably adapted for filling up the angles of the pediments, which always presented a difficulty to the sculptor, and they may have been specially selected with this end in view.

None of the discoveries on the Acropolis are more noteworthy than the wonderful series of female draped figures to which a room is now devoted in the museum there. Some difficulty has been experienced in determining whom they represent, owing mainly to the fact that in archaic art the same types were adopted both for a divinity and for the worshippers who gave the statues. But their special importance is that they form a series, similar indeed in type, but differing *in style* to such an extent that they present a complete illustration of the development of the Athenian school during the sixth century and down to 480 B.C. In





ARCHAIC FEMALE FIGURE  
(ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS)

spite of their superficial likeness, no two are identical, and they all show a marked individuality of treatment which distinguishes them at a glance from other schools.

The type is that of an erect figure, standing stiff and straight, with right forearm bent up and the left hand drawing aside the skirt of the drapery (Plate VIII.); the right hand has in all cases held an offering or attribute, but only one or two now remain. The treatment and arrangement of the drapery calls not only for admiration, but for careful study. It usually consists of a long tunic (chiton) with looped-up sleeves, over which a mantle (peplos or himation) falls in rich and graceful folds, rendered with great skill. The borders of the robes are often ornamented with inlaid patterns. Still more remarkable is the rendering of the faces, especially in the more developed examples; and the gradual evolution of an expression from the staring countenances of the earliest statues to the delicate rounded contours, the softened eyes and mouth, of the latest shows the rapidly developing powers of the Athenian artist.

Some of the early Athenian monuments are in the form of carved tombstones, such as that of the warrior Aristion by Aristocles, which

was found near Marathon ; it is however too early in date to be associated with the great battle. The work is delicate and finished in the extreme, but inaccurate in certain details, as in the right hand of the warrior, which is drawn like a foot, or the eye, which is represented as if in full face, as in the contemporary vase-paintings.

The beginning of the fifth century synchronises with a remarkable advance in the artistic history of Athens, paving the way for the approaching perfection of sculpture. We are now introduced to the names of many sculptors who attained to great renown in antiquity, and in some cases we are enabled to make comparisons with existing works. Among the female statues from the Acropolis one is mounted upon a base which may belong to it, bearing the name of Antenor, the sculptor who, as we know from literary records, made two bronze statues of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, the liberators of Athens from the tyrant Hipparchos. These statues were carried off to Persia by Xerxes in 480 B.C., but were brought back in the time of Alexander the Great ; meanwhile new ones were set up by Critios and Nesiotes ; and latterly the two groups stood side by side. Both have now

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 43

perished, but we have several copies of the statues, notably in a (restored) marble group at Naples. It is not absolutely certain which of the two originals this group represents, but criticism is generally agreed in preferring Critios and Nesiotes, partly on the ground of a description of their style by Lucian.

For an idea of Antenor's work, we must then refer to the female statue placed on the base with his name, while in this group we recognise the "concise, sinewy, and hard" treatment of which Lucian speaks. The two figures are in fact highly developed athletes—a great advance indeed upon the "Apollon" of Boeotia and the islands—with a tendency towards idealisation due to the halo of glory with which the two heroes were surrounded in the minds of the Athenian people.

This athletic school owes its existence in the first place to that of Argos and Sicyon, usually known as the Peloponnesian school, which had a great influence in the archaic period, and traced its origin to prehistoric times. But as they worked mainly in bronze, no existing works (or even copies) can be attributed to this school, and our knowledge rests mainly on literary evidence. We may however suppose that it was their special merit to have

developed and finally brought to perfection the athletic type in art. The influence of athletics on Greek art is nowhere more apparent than in the art of the Peloponnese, and was essentially typical of the Dorian character, as contrasted with the more sensuous and luxurious Ionian races.

The school of Aegina enjoyed a great reputation in antiquity. Pliny speaks highly of Aeginetan bronze, and the artistic activity of the island must have been great until it lost its independence about 455 B.C. The first sculptor mentioned is Callon, about the end of the sixth century. Quintilian alludes to the severity of his works, and compares his style to that of the Etruscans. But the most famous of all Aeginetan sculptors was Onatas, whose reputation spread all over the Mediterranean, bringing him commissions from Sicily, Italy, and Asia Minor, as well as Greece. This school seems to combine in its characteristics the athletic traditions of the Peloponnese and the originality of Athenian art; this is, however, natural, owing to its geographical position and political history.

We can now turn to a monument in which its style appears to be fully exemplified, and that too when it had reached its highest perfection.

## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 45

We refer to the groups sculptured in the pediments of the principal temple in Aegina, shown by recent discoveries to have been dedicated to Artemis Aphaia. They were unearthed in 1811, and are now in the Glyptothek at Munich, having been largely restored by Thorwaldsen. These sculptures are supposed to have been erected shortly after B.C. 480 in commemoration of the battle of Salamis. The eastern pediment, which represents an expedition made against Troy before the war by Herakles and Telamon, is more elaborate than the western, but not so well preserved; in the latter a similar subject is displayed, the fight of Greeks and Trojans over the body of Patroclos. In each case an Aeginetan hero is commemorated, in the eastern Telamon, in the western Achilles; thus illustrating a principle characteristic of Greek art, the commemoration of historical events by subjects from heroic legend.

What first strikes the observer of these pediments is the ingenuity with which the figures are fitted into the space, and also the arrangement by which the action is concentrated and increases towards the centre; these are two points in which the Greeks always excelled, as will be seen in the composition

of later pedimental groups. The individual figures, especially of warriors stooping to grasp their fallen comrades, may be taken as typical of the Aeginetan proficiency in the treatment of nude male forms; if not in this case athletes, they yet show the perfect proportions of the well-trained athlete. The modelling of the muscles is admirable, and the forms lithe and supple, free from any superfluity of flesh. Moreover, the strenuous and vigorous action shown in their attitudes denotes a new departure from the archaic stiffness and convention of pose that have hitherto obtained. Nor are the figures of the fallen warriors less meritorious; in particular one on the left of the east pediment is a masterpiece in its exhibition of overwhelming yet controlled suffering, as indicated by the clenched teeth, drawn lips, and contracted knee (Plate IX.). It is the first genuinely successful attempt of Greek art to reproduce bodily emotion, and in its reserve contrasts most favourably with the exaggerated realism of similar figures in the third century B.C., such as the Dying Gaul. Generally speaking, the style of the eastern pediment is more advanced than that of the western, but the similarity is too great to allow of the supposition that



FIGURE FROM W. PEDIMENT, TEMPLE OF AEGINA



## RISE OF GREEK SCULPTURE 47

they are not the work of one sculptor. It is probable, but not certain, that this sculptor was Onatas. In any case the Aeginetan pediments form a suitable link between the archaic period and the more advanced stage of art described in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### GREEK SCULPTURE OF THE FIFTH CENTURY : PHEIDIAS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Effect of Persian Wars—Rise of monumental sculpture—  
Myron—The sculptures of Olympia—Pheidias—The  
Parthenon sculptures—Polycleitos.

**W**ITH the conclusion of the last chapter we reached the important epoch of the Persian Wars, immediately heralding the time when Greek sculpture in its perfected form suddenly burst forth upon the world. The long period of training is over, and the various schools of art scattered over Greece have performed their task of developing artistic skill and creative genius in its various directions. Now for a time they stand aside, and Athens, the acknowledged political and military head of Greece, takes her place as supreme also in all branches of art. The Persian Wars indeed proved a blessing in disguise, for the sack of the Acropolis in 480, and the destruction of buildings and statues, gave an

extraordinary impetus to the genius of this wonderful people and impelled them to undertake with enthusiasm the labour of rendering their city even more beautiful than before. And working throughout the products of this new artistic movement a strong religious and patriotic motive is apparent, from the sculptures of Aegina down to the completion of the adornment of the Athenian Acropolis; more than one of the buildings of this period was raised with the express purpose of commemorating the great victories, and the same idea runs through all the decoration. The subjects represented—combats between Europeans and Asiatics, gods and giants, Greeks and Amazons, or Lapiths and Centaurs—are all chosen as emblematic of the great struggle from which the Greeks had emerged victorious, and of a deliverance from tyranny. At Athens, too, political circumstances tended to encourage artistic production, under the favouring auspices of two such men as Kimon and Pericles.

Before treating of Pheidias and the great monumental sculptures associated with his name, we must devote some space to a famous sculptor typical of the period immediately preceding him, who forms a connect-

ing link with the great names of the earlier Athenian and Aeginetan schools. This is Myron, a native of Eleutherae in Boeotia, but by residence an Athenian, who stands on the threshold of the perfected art and forms a connecting link with the earlier Athenian and Aeginetan schools. Not only was he one of the most famous sculptors in antiquity, but one of his works, the renowned Discobolos, is at the present day almost the best-known example of Greek sculpture of this period, if not of all times. We are fortunate in possessing several admirable copies not only of this statue, but also of another famous work, the Satyr Marsyas. On the other hand the wonderful cow or heifer, so often sung of by later poets of Greece and Rome, can only now be reproduced by the imagination. Myron was both versatile and prolific, his work being exclusively in bronze.

All his works were much praised for their freedom and naturalism, and for the lifelike attitudes and complexity of movement, such as we see in the Discobolos. Pliny says of him, "Myron was the first to extend the range of observation of nature, and was more versatile than Polycleitos . . . yet he concerned himself only with the body, and did not express

mental feelings. In the rendering of the hair he made no advance on archaic models." Quintilian says that the Discobolos is chiefly to be admired for the novelty and difficulty of the subject, and that anyone who found fault with its studied contortion would thereby disqualify himself as a critic.

The Discobolos is remarkable as representing not merely an action, but a single moment in the course of that action ; it is therefore at first sight somewhat puzzling, if not eccentric, that such a moment should be chosen when the figure is so distorted, and could not if alive maintain such a position for more than a few seconds. It is in fact an "instantaneous photograph," and shows us, as do other works such as the horses of the Parthenon frieze, what close observers of nature the Greeks were, even without the scientific aids that the moderns have ready to hand. It is almost impossible to explain the attitude in words, and yet it is exactly the position that the quoit-thrower was bound to adopt at a certain point while gathering impetus for the throw, as it is described by Lucian : "bending down into the position for the throw, turning towards the hand that holds the disc, slightly bending one knee, he seems just about to pull himself

together again after the throw." It must be borne in mind that the head in several copies has been wrongly restored, and should be looking up to the right hand, otherwise the balance could not be maintained (see Frontispiece).

His other famous athlete-statue, the Ladas, represented a winner of the long foot-race at Olympia, who died from over-effort. It is said to have expressed by the tension of the limbs and breathless lips the eager expectation of the victory for which he is about to contend. The Marsyas represented the Satyr of that name wondering at the flutes which Athena had let fall, forming a group with a figure of the goddess. According to the story, he picked them up and challenged Apollo to a contest in which he failed miserably. The Marsyas figure is preserved to us in two copies, a marble at Rome and a bronze in the British Museum. Here again we note the choice by the sculptor of a momentary action, the starting back at the instant when he finds the flutes and is confronted with their late owner. In spite of the interest of the subject, this group does not seem to have enjoyed the fame of the others described.

The great Doric temple of Zeus at Olympia, which was erected about the year 460 B.C.,

was decorated with sculptured pediments and metopes, the greater part of which have been recovered by excavation. The traveller Pausanias tells us the subjects of the pediments, and gives us the names of the sculptors, the eastern being by Paeonios, the western by Alcamenes. But though we now have the pediments practically complete, our knowledge of these two sculptors does not support his statement. They were probably only responsible for the original designs, which were entrusted to a local school of artists for execution.

The eastern pediment represents the preparations for the chariot-race of Pelops and Oinomaos at Olympia, when the former was suing for the hand of the latter's daughter, Hippodameia. The appropriateness of a local myth, in which was seen a prototype of the future contests in the games, is obvious. All the figures have been recovered, but their arrangement is a matter of some uncertainty. The middle of the pediment was occupied by the figure of the patron deity Zeus, the umpire of the race, flanked on one side by Pelops and his future bride, on the other by Oinomaos and his wife Sterope. In the angles are reclining figures of river-gods, the local streams

Alpheus and Cladeos. The spaces in between are filled by the chariots of the competitors with their drivers, and kneeling or seated figures. One of these, a pensive aged man whose features are treated in a most realistic, almost portrait-like fashion, has been thought to represent Myrtilos, the treacherous charioteer of Oinomaos.

The western pediment, though very similar in style, is startlingly different in composition. The rule is observed here, as elsewhere, that the eastern pediment of a temple should show less action than the western, and so we have, instead of a group of reposeful figures symmetrically disposed, a series of groups of struggling figures in violent action. The subject is the fight between the Lapiths and Centaurs at the wedding of Peirithoos, and the latter are represented carrying off the bride and her female associates. Here again the centre is occupied by a god, in this case Apollo, the angles by reclining figures of nymphs, and somewhat realistically treated old women. In spite of the excited and vehement action the symmetry and balance of the groups is wonderfully well preserved, and generally the parallelism of the two pediments is remarkable.

The style of both, though often bold and vigorous, is very unequal, by far the finest figure being the Apollo of the western, in spite of its somewhat archaic character, which almost recalls the Aegina figures. On the other hand realism is, as has been noted, a prominent characteristic of the elderly figures. This inequality of treatment is most likely due to the employment of a local school, which, like others in the Peloponnese, had made athletic figures a speciality. The metopes, some of which are very fine compositions, are by the same local school, and represent the twelve labours of Herakles.

The works which we have been considering represent what is sometimes called the Kimonian period, that is, the time between the Persian Wars and the rise of the Athenian democracy under Pericles, which ousted Kimon and the aristocratic party from power. As far as Athens is concerned this political change is the signal for a great artistic advance, fostered by the enthusiastic patronage of the great democratic leader, whose cultured mind displayed itself in the erection of many magnificent buildings and works of art. This period, from 450 to 430 B.C., is associated for all time

with the great name of Pheidias (500-432 B.C.), to whom were entrusted the important tasks of decorating the new temple of Athena on the Acropolis and of executing the statue of the goddess to be placed therein.

We have now no statues existing which can be attributed with certainty to the great master's hand; even the Parthenon sculptures cannot definitely be regarded as his work, although they undoubtedly reproduce his designs and were executed under his superintendence. But we are well supplied with literary records of his life and work, and the fact that he was selected to make the cult-statues for the two most magnificent temples of the period, and that these two statues, the Athena Parthenos and the Zeus of Olympia, were reckoned the finest known to the ancient world, leaves us no room for doubt as to his reputation with his contemporaries, or as to his having fully merited that reputation.

The statue of Athena Parthenos, which we may consider first of his works, was what is known as chryselephantine, or made of gold and ivory. The latter material was used for the nude parts of the figure, the gold for the drapery and accessories, the whole being erected on a wooden core. Although the statue

was probably destroyed under the Byzantine Empire, one or two copies have been preserved which give a fair idea of it, in spite of their immeasurable inferiority (Plate X.). With the aid of these and of the literary records we can reconstruct with fair success the magnificent presentment of the patron goddess of Athens. The goddess stood on a sculptured plinth holding out in her right hand a small figure of Victory and resting her left on her shield, round which twined her serpent Erichthonios. On her head was an elaborate helmet with triple crest, a Sphinx between two Gryphons, and on her breast the aegis with its Medusa-head and fringe of serpents. She wore over her long chiton or tunic, the peplos or mantle which played such an important part in her annual Panathenaic festival, and on her feet were ornamented sandals. The effect of the whole, with the gold drapery, the tinted ivory of the face and features, and the various ornamental attributes, must have been gorgeous in the extreme.

The great statue of Zeus at Olympia was, like the Athena, of gold and ivory. In spite of the description given by Pausanias, we know even less of it than of the Athena, no copies having survived, except some rough reproduc-

tions on late coins of Elis. But we know at least that the god was enthroned with a sceptre in his left hand surmounted by his eagle, and a Victory standing on the right, and that his face was expressive of majesty, yet of mild benignity. The sculptor himself claimed to have illustrated by his conception the words of Homer :—

“He spake, and the dark brows bent for the mighty  
promise sealed.

Waved round the deathless head of his majesty full  
revealed

The ambrosial locks, and mighty Olympos rocked  
and reeled” (WAY).

Quintilian says that the beauty and divine majesty of the figure added something to the received religion. It was in fact regarded as one of the seven wonders, and as the greatest work in sculpture, of the ancient world, one that exercised a lofty religious influence on all beholders. Not only was the drapery richly embroidered, but the throne was inlaid with various precious materials and every available space was covered with decoration, the arms, legs, and supports taking the form of Sphinxes, Victories, Graces, and Seasons. Besides reliefs along the edges and cross-bars, the lower part was surrounded with a screen adorned with

paintings by Pheidias' brother Panaenus. From the description of Pausanias it may be inferred that the statue was approximately thirty-five feet in height.

These statues show that Pheidias was the first sculptor to produce ideal embodiments of the highest moral qualities of which a Greek could conceive, such as majesty, wisdom, or beauty, and to give a new meaning to the religious aspect of each type of divinity. Secondly, he was the first sculptor who combined this idealism with a perfect mastery over his material, thus producing a complete harmony than was attained by any before or since. The sculptor of the archaic period, like the pre-Raphaelites of the fifteenth century, was often full of religious enthusiasm which he could not express; the sculptor of the fourth or third century, like Rubens or Correggio, was a perfect master of technical expression, but the religious aspect of his art was not necessarily the first consideration; and thus, as we find the perfect combination in Raffaele the painter, so we find it in Pheidias the sculptor.

Although we no longer possess any works actually from the hand of this great sculptor, there is yet one group of masterpieces which will always be associated with him, namely the

architectural sculptures of the Parthenon, the great Athenian temple of which a description is elsewhere given (p. 107). We know at all events that the decoration of the building was carried on under his direction, and we need not hesitate to see therein the evidence of the master-mind, if not of the master-hand.

The sculptures of the Parthenon, familiarly known as the Elgin Marbles—at least that portion of them which was brought to England by Lord Elgin—consist of three distinct groups: the pedimental sculptures, east and west; the metopes over the outer colonnade; and the frieze running round the upper part of the cella inside the colonnade. Considerations of style and execution point to the metopes being the earliest of the three.

These metopes are on the whole badly preserved, and it is not even possible to identify the subjects on the north side. The eastern appear to have represented scenes from the battle of the gods and giants, the western, combats of Greeks and Amazons; those on the south are almost all devoted to combats (in single groups) of Lapiths and Centaurs. Generally speaking, considerable variation of style and composition is to be observed; while some are dull and lifeless or somewhat

awkwardly arranged, others are full of life and vigour. It is therefore clear that they are the work of several hands, some of whom would appear to be still under the influence of the older "athletic" schools, though others display considerable originality.

Of the two pedimental groups a brief record is made by Pausanias, who says, "What is seen on the pediment on entering the temple relates to the birth of Athena; at the back is the contest of Poseidon and Athena for the land." The central groups in each case have practically disappeared, these being of course the most important parts of the composition, but the greater part of the surrounding figures remain to form one of the chief glories of the British Museum.

The eastern pediment was not only the more important, being over the entrance to the temple, but also, as is evidenced by the existing remains, by far the more beautiful. The central group can hardly have been rendered in the archaic manner of the vase-paintings, in which the goddess is represented as a diminutive figure emerging from the head of Zeus. Rather we must assume that his artistic instincts led to the creation of a new type, in which the goddess stood fully grown

and fully armed before her father, whose figure may have been balanced by that of Hephaistos, who according to legend assisted with his axe in achieving her birth.

The remaining figures form a series of sculptures unsurpassed by any in existence. The scene is supposed to take place in heaven, the time being sunrise, and therefore we have at one end of the pediment Helios (the Sun) rising in his four-horse chariot from the ocean, at the other Selene (the Moon) descending in hers. Facing Helios is the well-known reclining figure which has from time immemorial been known as Theseus. This name, however, rests on no grounds whatever, and the suggestion that the figure is a personification of Mount Olympos, on which the rays of the rising sun are striking, has much to recommend it. Next to this, which may be regarded as the noblest existing presentation of the nude male form, are two seated figures of women in richly-disposed draperies, perhaps the Horae who guarded the gates of Olympos. On either side of the central group is a draped female figure in motion; these two have generally been identified as Iris the messenger of the gods proclaiming the news to the world, and Nike (Victory). Finally, between the Nike and the





GROUP OF "THREE FATES" FROM PARTHENON  
(EAST PEDIMENT)

Selene is an exquisite group of three seated women, the further of whom reclines on the lap of the second (Plate XI.); these are usually known as the Three Fates, but they have no distinctive attributes.

In the western pediment the composition of the central group is much more certain. Not only have we the evidence of a seventeenth-century drawing, but also a vase of about 400 B.C. on which it appears to be closely reproduced. The strife of Athena and Poseidon was a peculiarly Attic legend, closely associated with the Athenian Acropolis, the story being that both deities claimed the land of Attica, and that while Poseidon produced a spring of salt water in support of his claim, Athena produced an olive tree. The pediment then represented Athena in the latter act, while Poseidon, whose spring was also represented, starts back in amazement. This central group was bounded on either side by the four-horse chariots of the two combatants, driven respectively by Victory and by Amphitrite, the sea-god's consort. The remaining figures are probably all local divinities or mere personifications such as river-gods, indicating the scene of action.

In the balance of the figures on these

pediments there is a great advance on what we have already seen at Olympia; although in some respects less exact, it is more subtle, avoiding monotony by variations of detail, while yet retaining a general correspondence of figure to figure. A notable feature in the east pediment is the manner in which the side figures are supposed to be affected by the great event taking place in the centre; those nearest the figures of Iris and Victory appear to listen with interest to the announcement of the news, the two adjoining scarcely turn their heads in that direction, and the two reclining figures are as yet not influenced at all.

The "Theseus" and one of the river gods (the Ilissos) exhibit the attainment of absolute perfection in the rendering of nude forms, as does the group of the "Three Fates" in the drapery. The nude forms stand equidistant from the Aegina pediments on the one hand and the Hermes of Praxiteles (see p. 75) on the other, free from the severity and stiffness of the one, and from the softness of the other; they are both round and firm, broad yet free from exaggeration. The draperies are unconventional, but not accidental, as they often are in the Olympia pediments: the grooves are worked deep, with sharp edges, yet there is

no hardness, and the general effect is one of perfect harmony and pleasing richness. Nor must we omit to mention here the admirable modelling of the horse's heads.

The question whether we may regard these sculptures as the work, wholly or in part, of Pheidias, is of course difficult to decide. That the general design was his can hardly be doubted, and it is clear that his influence is here far greater than in the metopes; but though he must have devoted to them much general supervision, it is hardly conceivable that while at work on his great statue of Athena, he can have found sufficient time to execute so great a work as these with his own hand.

The frieze of the Parthenon, as already indicated, ran round the top of the outer wall of the cella, in a series of slabs sculptured in low relief; the greater part of it is now in the British Museum. Accustomed as we are to view it with ease almost on the level of the eye, it is difficult to realise that this magnificent work must have been far less easy to see while the temple remained perfect, owing to its height from the ground and the rows of columns close in front of it. But it has been observed that the relief is generally higher in the upper part of the slabs than in the lower.

and it is probable that a certain amount of light was reflected on to it from the marble pavement.

The subject represented is the Panathenaic procession, a feature of the games held every fourth year specially in honour of Athena. In this procession the *peplos* or sacred robe of the goddess was solemnly brought—woven anew on each occasion—to adorn her statue. It was accompanied by offerings and victims for sacrifice, under the guidance of the chief magistrates and a select concourse of young men and maidens. In the frieze the procession is conceived as starting from the western front, which is occupied by knights making ready themselves and their horses (Plate XII.), and advancing along the sides till the two lines converge upon the east. Here, before the culminating point is reached in the central group, the continuity is broken by two groups of seated deities, chiefly of the inner Olympian circle, whose presence in the line of the procession may at first sight seem strange. But it is possible that in accordance with an artistic convention they are really to be conceived as *in the background* presiding over the scene. To represent this with the correct perspective might have been easy in a picture, at least in



RIDERS FROM FRIEZE OF PARTHENON



modern art, but the Greeks had not yet attained to such a knowledge of perspective in painting, and therefore in sculpture the task was quite beyond even a Pheidias.

The central group represents a priest folding a large garment or piece of drapery with the assistance of a boy; but though it is obvious that the peplos of the goddess must be intended, it is not equally clear why it should be folded up. Perhaps the best explanation is that the priest is folding up and putting away the *old* peplos preparatory to the reception of the new one; but it is certainly curious that the latter should not appear at all on the frieze.

In the style and composition of the frieze the genius of Pheidias' master-mind is not less apparent than in the pediments; but he can hardly have been responsible for its execution with his own hand. At all events the unity of the design is unmistakable, a unity which is yet full of variety in the individual figures with their differences of pose and action, the whole presenting a marvellous combination of dignified repose, as in the group of deities, and rapid action, as in the procession of horsemen. Every figure in the frieze will repay close study; and yet a no less satisfactory result may be gained if it is only regarded as a whole, as it

is possible to do in the Elgin Room of the British Museum, with the arrangement there adopted. The technical skill of the craftsman is mainly exhibited in the skilful manner in which the low relief is treated, an appearance of roundness being given to the figures by a slight inclination of the surface of the reliefs. Not only in vigour and majesty, but also in delicacy and grace the frieze of the Parthenon is unequalled as a work of art.

Space forbids to speak of the other sculptors and monuments representative of the fifth century, with one exception. During the latter half of it one name stands out as almost rivaling that of Pheidias; what the latter was to the Athenian schools of art, Polycleitos was to that of Argos. Like the other Doric schools it was always pre-eminent for its representations of athletes, and in this respect we shall see that Polycleitos not only upheld but perfected the ancient traditions.

A native of Sicyon, he lived and worked at Argos, the time of his activity being about 440 to 410 B.C. He was certainly younger than Pheidias, who, as Pliny says, "opened the door to the knowledge which Polycleitos acquired and perfected." His greatest work was a

gold-and-ivory statue of Hera for her temple near Argos, which was rebuilt about 423; rough copies of it appear on coins of Argos, and it was considered a worthy counterpart to Pheidias' Zeus.

But the fame of Polycleitos rests rather on his statues of heroic figures and athletes, more particularly the latter. He worked almost exclusively in bronze, a material better suited for the latter class of subject, as was also recognised by Myron and Lysippos. Among the former the most famous was a wounded Amazon, which according to report was made in competition with Pheidias and Cresilas for the temple at Ephesus, our sculptor being adjudged the first prize. However this may be, there are in existence several figures of Amazons which must be replicas of fifth-century statues, and among these one type is clearly Polycleitan. In this type the Amazon leans on a pillar with the right hand over the head, the wound being indicated on her right breast, and less directly by the expression of her face. The peculiarly Polycleitan characteristics of this type are the general squareness of the figure, with its athletic, almost virile proportions; the absence of any strong emotion or expression of suffering; and the pose with all the weight on one foot.

But the really typical works of this sculptor are his two famous statues of athletes—the Diadumenos, or victorious athlete binding his hair with a fillet, and the Doryphoros or spear-bearer. In these two typical figures he laid down a law of human proportions, and the latter was actually known as the Canon or standard of form. Of both there exist undoubted replicas, mostly not earlier than the Graeco-Roman period (Plate XIII.). Apart from the fact that bronze necessarily loses much of its character when translated into marble, we must make considerable allowance for the tendency of the copyist to exaggerate and obscure the original forms, and some of the copies are decidedly heavy and mechanical. Nevertheless we can trace in these two figures the delineation of a fully-developed young athlete, whose muscles are rendered with a vigour and accuracy to which no other sculptor attained. But with all his excellences Polycleitos is not a satisfying artist, and there is a lack of "soul" and ideality about his works which impels us to regard him as an academic sculptor, in no sense a genius. In viewing the range of his subjects as a whole, we note that his tendency is to select figures which are the fullest expression of physical



COPY OF THE ATHENA PARTHENOS OF PHEIDIAS





ATHLETE-FIGURES, AFTER POLYCLEITOS



development. With the exception of the Hera, which stands by itself, he avoids the representation of the greater gods or of typical feminine figures ; anything like grace or sentiment, or deep spiritual qualities must not be looked for in his work. On the other hand we must not be blind to his merits. Quintilian commends his carefulness in detail, and the "finish" of his statues, which he was able to combine with massiveness and breadth of style.

The chief characteristics of fifth-century sculpture are breadth of style and ideality ; these traits, though best exemplified in Pheidias, are by no means confined to the great master. Pheidias however founded no school properly so called ; he had associates in his work, but they mostly followed their own subsequent lines. If the phrase may be used without misconception, Pheidias was absolutely normal, and without idiosyncrasies ; he did not therefore lend himself to imitation, still less to the exaggeration and degeneration in which the following of a great master often terminates.

But he created types which had an unconscious influence on his successors, as in the case of his Zeus and Athena ; and many of his technical innovations also became a heritage.

The reflection of his style is perhaps best seen in the sepulchral monuments of the fourth century (p. 85), in which we observe a transition from the ideal to the merely beautiful and from the general to the individual which represents, briefly, the transition from Pheidias to Praxiteles.

The epoch of this transition corresponds with the period of the Peloponnesian War; and it is probably in a measure due to the fact that after 430 B.C. there was less scope for the application of art in its highest forms to the adornment of great public buildings. It was the Persian Wars which acted as a uniting element in Greek politics and culture; but the result of the Peloponnesian War was the promotion of an individualism which completely changed the character of both.

## CHAPTER IV

### GREEK SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS (400-146 B.C.)

Characteristics of fourth-century sculpture—Praxiteles—Scopas—Sculpture in Asia Minor—Lysippos—The Hellenistic Age—The schools of Pergamon and Rhodes—The Aphrodite of Melos.

#### I. FOURTH-CENTURY SCULPTURE

**I**N the preceding chapter we hinted at the gradual replacement of idealism in art by realism, and of political and artistic unity by individualising tendencies. The fourth century marks the rapid growth of these two principles. In the political world we note the disappearance of the old democracy of culture with the decay of Athens, followed by the short-lived military supremacies of Thebes and Sparta, and culminating in the "one-man" dominion of Alexander the Great, an entirely new feature in Greek history. Similarly in the domain of art the history of the century shows the gradual rationalising of religious ideas as expressed in sculptured representations of the gods, and the replacement of the idealised cosmic conceptions

by individualised figures in which the religious idea makes way for mere grace and sentiment. Instead of Zeus, Hera, and Athena, Dionysos, Aphrodite, and Apollo are the typical subjects of the sculptor's art, and the motives of his creations are not religious but ethical.

The most typical name of the century is Praxiteles, who would seem from the language of ancient writers to have been held in higher estimation than any other sculptor of antiquity. Without going so far as this we may yet affirm that he was the greatest sculptor of the fourth century and that he is most representative of its character and achievements. By birth and training an Athenian, he appears to have worked also in other parts of the Greek world, and though there is no certainty as to dates we may place the period of his activity about 370-350 B.C. From the pages of Pliny and other writers we may glean a list of no less than forty-six recorded works of his, besides others about which there is uncertainty. About one-third of these are single figures of gods, and another third groups of deities or other mythological scenes ; the remainder are either *genre* figures, such as a woman spinning or a girl decking herself with jewels, or representations

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 75

of his mistress Phryne. Most of these were in marble, though occasionally he employed bronze.

As compared with other sculptors, we are exceptionally fortunate in being able to recognise several of the more famous of Praxiteles' works in copies, and thus his characteristics have long been familiar to students of classical art when other masters had as yet hardly been properly estimated. But since the year 1877, it has been possible to say of him what can be said of no other great sculptor, that we actually possess one of his chief works direct from his hand (Plate XIV.).

The Hermes of Praxiteles, twenty-five years ago a mere name, is now as familiar to us as the Aphrodite of Melos or the Apollo Belvedere. When this marvellous work was brought to light by the German excavators at Olympia, there was no difficulty in identifying it, as it had been expressly stated by Pausanias that "a Hermes of marble, carrying the child Dionysos, the work of Praxiteles" stood on the spot where this statue was found. The state of its preservation was, all things considered, little short of marvellous, and in view of the rarity of marble heads in perfect condition, it was a matter for much congratulation to find

this absolutely unharmed. But it is not only the beauty of the head and of the pose and modelling of the body that attract the attention; to those who have seen the original placed in the soft half-light of its room in the museum at Olympia, a revelation is given of the appearance of a genuine Greek statue. It is the wonderful colouring and texture of the marble with its play of light and shade which make its special attraction, and unfortunately this is all lost in casts.

To speak of the statue in detail, it may be mentioned that the right arm and both legs from the knees, with the exception of the exquisite sandalled right foot, are wanting, and that the former is generally supposed to have held up a bunch of grapes, towards which the child extended its left hand. The graceful easy curve in which the body is posed was a specially Praxitelean characteristic, appearing in all his works; and this leaning, restful attitude forms a remarkable contrast to the square, sturdy figures of Polycleitos. The left arm which holds the child rests on a tree-trunk covered with drapery, the folds of which are reproduced with wonderful realism; but the child is the least successful part of the composition. This was a singular deficiency in



THE HERMES OF PRAXITELES



## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 77

Greek sculptors of the period ; it is rare to find a child treated otherwise than as a miniature adult. And we may note a curious parallel to it in the many failures of the great Italian painters to do justice to the figure of the infant Saviour.

The Hermes was not regarded in antiquity as one of Praxiteles' great works, but it must now always form the basis of any criticism of his style, and it is possible that even if one of the more famous ones had been preserved in its place we should not have received such a favourable impression.

Ancient writers agreed in assigning to the Aphrodite of Knidos the first place for beauty among Greek statues. The type is well known to us from copies on coins and in minor works of bronze or terra-cotta, and marble copies exist at Munich and in the Vatican. The goddess is represented as just stepping into the bath, but perfect as the treatment of the nude form must have been, the effect is greatly marred by the obvious consciousness of nudity displayed in her attitude. Although Praxiteles' attempt to express the modesty of the goddess was doubtless sincere, it is obvious that with the inevitable subsequent degeneration of taste this trait was destined to become vulgarised

into a less refined conception, the modesty becoming more apparent than real. The pose of the figure is almost identical with that of the Hermes, though the necessity for a support is not so strongly accentuated. The head, and especially the hair and eyes, were selected by Lucian as points in which Praxiteles excelled all other sculptors, a criticism, by the way, which we may fairly apply to his Hermes.

Contemporary with Praxiteles, but in many ways showing a marked contrast to him, was his great rival Scopas (390-350 B.C.), also a member of the Athenian school, although a native of Paros. In him we observe a remarkable energy and passion which contrasts strongly with the dreamy sensuousness and delicate grace of his rival. Only about twenty works by him are recorded, and his fame in antiquity never approached that of Praxiteles. None of them are preserved in originals and few in copies, but we have in the scanty fragments of the pedimental sculptures made by him for a temple at Tegea in Arcadia two heads of such striking and original character that they afford a very fair idea of his style. The peculiarity of these heads consists in the treatment of the eye, with its piercing far-

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 79

directed expression and the heavy overhanging brow, which at once arrest and impress themselves upon the observer.

Most famous of all the works attributed to Scopas was a great group representing the slaying of the children of Niobe by Apollo and Artemis, which was brought from Asia Minor to Rome and set up in a temple of Apollo about 35 B.C. Pliny expresses doubts as to whether it was the work of Scopas or Praxiteles, and modern writers have largely wavered between the claims of the two. If however the group as we know it from copies reflects the style of either, our choice must lie with Scopas; but though undoubtedly in keeping with the traditions of fourth-century style, it may equally well be derived from some other sculptor under his influence. Of the various copies of this group the majority are now in the Uffizi at Florence; but none of them can compete with the Chiaramonti Niobid of the Vatican, a marvellous study of drapery in motion as the girl flees in a vain endeavour to escape her fate. The Florence group of the grief-stricken mother holding up her drapery to protect her younger child is a well-known one; and in this as in the others we note the reserve and moderation

with which passion is still expressed in the fourth century.

In the fifth century nearly all the great buildings with whose decoration we have been concerned were to be found in Greece itself; but the political changes brought about by the Peloponnesian War for the most part put an end to Hellenic ambition in this direction, especially at Athens, and the centre of architectural activity in the fourth century is removed to Asia Minor. Here the Ionic style is seen to be just at its height and the mantle of Peisistratos and Pericles has fallen on a Mausolos, an Attalus, or an Alexander. Nevertheless it was found necessary to have recourse to the great masters of the plastic art in Greece for the decoration of these magnificent buildings, and thus we hear of Scopas and others of his contemporaries being actively occupied for some time in Asia Minor.

The most important building in this respect is the Mausoleum, of which we have given a description in our chapter on Architecture (p. 116). Pliny tells us that the sculpture was executed jointly by four artists—Scopas, Bryaxis, Timotheus, and Leochares—each being responsible for one side. The colossal portrait-statue of Mausolos, which cannot be identified as any

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 81

artist's work, is yet a very successful achievement, full of dignity and broadly conceived, the treatment of the drapery being very fine ; the face is obviously not a Greek type, but conveys a very favourable impression of the great prince.

The remains of sculpture preserved to us from the Mausoleum are partly in the round, including the colossal four-horse chariot on the top, various equestrian statues, and figures of lions ; partly decorative friezes, of which three can be identified, though their respective positions are doubtful. The finest work is to be seen in the smallest of the three, representing a chariot-race ; although it is in a very fragmentary condition it contains one figure which stands out as a work of supreme excellence, a figure in the long trailing robe girt at the waist which charioteers always wear, leaning forward as if straining towards the goal. The keen intense expression and the forceful attitude at once recall the characteristics we have observed in the work of Scopas, who may therefore have been entrusted with the design of this particular frieze. As to the three other artists, although existing works give us some idea of their respective styles, it is impossible to recognise them in any parts of the Mausoleum sculptures. It is most likely

that the association of each with a particular part of the building was a later story, arising from the fact that all four were associated in the general design.

Among the many treasures of fourth-century sculpture obtained by English explorers for the British Museum none holds a higher place than the exquisite figure of the mourning Demeter, or *mater dolorosa*, as it might almost be styled, brought by Sir Charles Newton from Knidos (Pl. XV.). The sculptor is unknown, and we cannot institute a comparison with any other existing work; but it is possible to observe in the figure the influence both of Scopas and Praxiteles. The latter sculptor worked as we know at Knidos, and Scopas at Halicarnassos close by, so that the artist, if a local man, may well have come under the influence of the two great masters. The expression of Demeter's face, as a rendering of resignation and chastened grief, has seldom been surpassed, and as a presentment of the dignity of sorrow it ranks with the greatest products of medieval genius.

The second half of the fourth century marks a period of transition from the somewhat sentimental and emotional creations of the first half to the realistic school of the succeeding age.



**DEMETER, FROM KNIDOS**



## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 83

It is also distinguished by a revival of heroic subjects and healthy vigorous conceptions, culminating in the work of Lysippos, the most conspicuous representative of the period.

Lysippos was a native of Sicyon and flourished about 330-315 B.C. ; we are told that he was self-taught. He was a most prolific artist, and though only thirty-five of his works are recorded by name he is said to have made 1,500 in all. He exercised considerable influence on subsequent art, especially at Rome. His chief characteristics are realism, vigour, and artistic skill, and a manliness and robustness to which the bronze in which he exclusively worked was well suited. His range of subjects includes deities, heroes, and athletes, among the former being four of Zeus, one of colossal size ; a Poseidon, in which he created the type for succeeding generations ; and the famous Kairos or Opportunity at Sicyon. This latter was a purely allegorical figure, though probably conceived as an athletic youthful deity of the Hermes type, very far removed from our idea of Father Time. Among his heroes were several figures of Heracles, his conception of whom as a toil-worn man resting from his labours is quite new in Greek art and more characteristic of the succeeding century.

Alexander the Great was his special patron, and according to tradition allowed no one else to make statues of him. Of these, three are recorded, and several extant statues and busts of the great king illustrate the descriptions given of them, even if they cannot be referred to these originals. We are told that he reproduced Alexander's physical peculiarities, the twist of his neck and the liquid gaze of his eye, without sacrificing the lion-like vigour of his general appearance.

The most famous of his statues, however, seems to have been one of an athlete scraping himself with a strigil after exercising in the palaestra, known as the Apoxyomenos. This work, of which a good marble copy exists in the Vatican, has been described as a study in athletic *genre* rather than a representation of an individual athlete. It has been supposed that it was meant to embody a new system of proportions, varying from those of Polycleitos. Pliny tells us that he made the bodily proportions more slender and the heads smaller; and certainly if we compare the Vatican Apoxyomenos with the athletes of Polycleitos this is the impression we carry away. He was also distinguished for his power of expressing character, as already noted in the case of

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 85

Alexander ; and his statues of Aesop and the Seven Wise Men may have been studies in this direction. An illustration of his robust and virile tendencies is given by the remarkable omission of any female creations from the list of his works.

Lysippos is generally regarded as standing on the threshold of the new or Hellenistic Age, and there is no doubt that his influence on later sculpture is very conspicuous, especially in technique and artistic skill. Before, however, we turn to his immediate successors, we must allude to two groups of monuments which are associated with the fourth century if not with the names of any great masters.

In the series of Attic tombstones which have been discovered in the Ceramicus, the chief burial-place of ancient Athens, we are confronted with a group of subjects carved in relief, which though undoubtedly belonging to the fourth century, yet in a great measure recall the spirit of the preceding phase of art. Beautiful as they appear to our eyes, it must be remembered that like the vase-paintings they are really minor products of art, in no case associated with great names, but from the workshops of humble craftsmen. These would naturally learn and retain the traditions of an

earlier period, and it cannot be doubted that the genius of Pheidias for sculpture in relief would exercise a specially powerful influence. Hence we see in these Attic sepulchral monuments of the fourth century a conservative tendency which forms a marked contrast with the passion and sentiment of a Scopas or Praxiteles.

Their subjects are mainly typical scenes from daily life: women at their toilet or work, athletes and warriors on horseback, banquet-scenes, and, most common of all, parting-scenes between members of a family. Their exact significance is not always easy to explain, but in most cases the only idea of the artist was to represent the deceased as he or she had been in daily life, in some typical occupation. Thus the monument of Dexileos, who fell in fighting against the Corinthians in 394 B.C., depicts him on horseback, spearing a fallen foe; or again that of Hegeso, perhaps the most beautiful of the series, shows the lady taking jewels from a box held out by an attendant. In the parting-scenes on the other hand there seems to be a direct reference to the death of the deceased. Although these reliefs vary greatly in merit, many being quite inferior in execution, from the sculptor's stock-in-trade,



SEPULCHRAL RELIEFS FROM ATHENS



## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 87

yet some stand out conspicuous for delicacy and refinement of conception ; the Hegeso, for instance, is a truly exquisite figure, and worthy of a disciple of Pheidias. While this is a gem of low relief, the Dexileos, appropriately to its theme, is conceived in high relief, informed with life and vigour (Plate XVI.).

The other group of monuments is that of the magnificent marble sarcophagi discovered not many years ago at Sidon and now at Constantinople, which represent quite a new departure in fourth-century art. Their most remarkable feature is the elaborate system of colouring, which at the time of their discovery was in a marvellous state of preservation. It seems at first sight curious that purely Greek works of such merit should be found on such a distant site, but it was probably, as with the tombs of Lycia, the result of some long-continued tradition. Among them is an exceedingly beautiful one known by the name of *Les Pleureuses*, the Weeping Women. It is in the form of an Ionic temple, between the columns of which stand eighteen figures in varying graceful attitudes, but all represented as mourning. The emotion is chastened and subdued, and the Attic origin of the work is clear from its close parallels with the tombstones.

But the most magnificent and beautiful of all is the great sarcophagus known as the tomb of Alexander. It is so called, not because he was buried therein, but because the subjects sculptured in relief on its sides relate to episodes in his life: battles of Greeks and Oriental warriors, and hunting-scenes in which the conqueror takes part. The general effect is greatly enhanced by the exquisite colouring which gives a more lifelike appearance to the figures; the style is Attic, and many of the figures with their intense expressions and vigorous movements suggest the influence of Scopas. Great as Lysippos' influence undoubtedly was, it is probably rather to Scopas that we must look for the inspiration that produced the highly emotional works typical of the succeeding age, with which such achievements as the Alexander sarcophagus form a connecting link.

## II. THE HELLENISTIC AGE: DECADENCE OF GREEK SCULPTURE

The growth of Hellenic culture in Asia Minor already noted during the fourth century received an additional impetus after the death of Alexander the Great, whose conquests had changed the character of Greek life by shifting

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 89

its centre of gravity eastwards. Hence in the Hellenistic period, covering two centuries from about 320 B.C. to 146 B.C., we find that the pre-eminent schools of sculpture are associated with the city of Pergamon in Asia Minor and the island of Rhodes, as the result of the eastward tendency of Greek art which began in the fourth century. Both were politically independent, and active centres of culture. The school of Pergamon centres round the names of its rulers Attalus and Eumenes I. and II., all of whom were great patrons both of art and literature, and many of its productions are connected with historical events such as the inroad of the Gauls in 279-240 B.C. Other schools of less importance are associated with Ephesus and Tralles.

Attalus, after his great victory over the invading Gauls in 241 B.C., appears to have imported a school of sculptors from Greece, with a view of erecting a series of monuments for its commemoration. These statues, which were of bronze, have disappeared, but there exist various marble statues which from style and subject can be recognised as replicas. The best known of these is the familiar "Dying Gaul" of the Capitol at Rome, popularly but inaccurately styled the "Gladiator,"

for the propagation of which error Byron has been mainly responsible. The originals of the Dying Gaul and other kindred figures were set up at Pergamon ; but others, as we learn from Pausanias, were dedicated at Athens and placed against the south wall of the Acropolis. Marble copies from this latter group have been identified, about forty in all, at Paris, Naples, Venice, and elsewhere.

In these monuments we have for the first time Historical Art—not symbolical as in Oriental monuments, but realistic records of contemporary events. Differences of nationality are expressed by the different types of face—an outcome of the individualism of the fourth century and the rise of portrait-sculpture. Thus in the Dying Gaul we see the unmistakable indications of a barbarian, in the rough matted hair, the moustache, and the collar or torc of twisted gold round his neck, as well as in the shape of his shield. The anatomical details are executed with almost Lysippian truth and vigour, and the whole conception shows that the Greek of the period could feel admiration for the courage, and pity for the fate, of his fallen foe. Though less generally known, a companion group of the Gaul and his wife is hardly inferior ; a highly dramatic con-

## SCULPTURE AFTER PHEIDIAS 91

ception, it is yet unaffected by the exaggerated realism of later times.

In the year 197 B.C. Eumenes II., who had succeeded his father Attalus, set about the further adornment of the city of Pergamon by the erection of many magnificent buildings and monuments. Among these the greatest was the altar of Zeus, one of the chief wonders of the ancient world, and referred to in the Apocalypse as "Satan's seat." It consisted of a huge base about 100 feet square, on which stood the altar, in a court surrounded by a colonnade. This was approached by a wide staircase, occupying part of the west side. It was adorned with two sculptured friezes, a smaller one round the inside of the colonnade and a larger one round the base; these have been excavated by German explorers, and are now in the Berlin Museum.

The great frieze represents a battle of the gods and giants, and exemplifies the art of the younger Pergamene school. The subject was probably chosen as typifying the struggles of the people against the savage Gauls, and as we have seen before, was one of the favourite subjects in Greek art, especially for commemorative monuments. The colossal size of the figures—they are over seven feet in height—

the elaborate and vigorous conceptions, and the wonderful technical skill exhibited, combine to render this one of the most remarkable and imposing examples of Greek art which we possess. At the same time the general effect it produces is one of fatiguing restlessness, and in spite of the dramatic action and powerful figures, it fails to give the æsthetic pleasure that we find in contemplating the friezes of fifth-century art. It is in fact the most typical presentment of the characteristics of decadent Greek art. The sculptor is carried away by the desire to depict emotion and by his mastery of technical difficulties ; the religious significance of his theme is lost sight of, and idealism gives place entirely to realism.

The Rhodian school of sculpture was largely influenced by Lysippos, who reintroduced the making of colossal figures, and whose pupil Chares attained to distinction as the artist of the world-famed Colossus of Rhodes ; he was a native of Lindus in that island. This statue was 105 feet high and one of the seven wonders of the world ; it was set up in 303 B.C., but was overthrown by an earthquake sixty years later and never re-erected. We have no information as to its appearance

except that it represented Helios, the sun-god, who was the especial patron of the city; but we can be certain that it did not bestride the harbour holding a lantern!

A later group of sculptors is rendered illustrious by a work which has acquired a reputation second to no monument of antiquity, though perhaps beyond its actual deserts. We speak of the famous Laocoon group, the work of Agesandros, Polydoros, and Athenodoros, which is assigned to the beginning of the first century B.C. It is therefore strictly speaking a work of the Roman period, but artistically represents a purely Greek development of sculpture. Its fame in modern times has been chiefly due to Lessing's well-known essay; but with our present knowledge of ancient art we should be slow to accept either his conclusions or those of Pliny, who thought it the greatest work of art in existence.

The Laocoon represents a step beyond the Pergamene frieze in the direction of dramatic conception and naturalism, and in the increased attention paid to anatomical realism. A question that has always been discussed in connection with it from the days of Lessing is its relation to the description of the same subject by Virgil. The discrepancies are how-

ever too many to permit of the supposition that he was inspired by the group; both poet and sculptor must have had recourse to a common original, and we know at all events that Sophocles composed a tragedy on this theme. All that need be said further in reference to the group is that it is a wonderful study of physical agony and terror, but that all true artistic feeling seems to be subordinated to technical skill.

We must now turn our attention to a series of statues, which though they cannot be referred to any definite artist or school, are yet typical of all that is best and most characteristic in Hellenistic art. Foremost among them is the Aphrodite of Melos, more familiarly but somewhat inaccurately known as the Venus of Milo, a statue which has been considered, and not without reason, as the most beautiful in existence (Pl. XVII.). Its beauty however is almost entirely lost in plaster reproductions, and it must be seen at the Louvre in all the lustre of its glistening marble for a full appreciation of its merits. There is in fact so much of fifth-century feeling about the statue that it at first sight suggests a much earlier date, and it is with reluctance that we accept the external evidence which forces us to place it so late as the end of the second century.



**THE APHRODITE OF MELOS**



The original motive of the lost arms remains an unsolved problem ; the clue may however be sought among the terra-cotta figures of the Hellenistic period from Sicily and Southern Italy, many of which represent Aphrodite in various poses and with various attributes. It is at all events clear that the sculptor endeavoured to combine fifth-century simplicity and dignity with features more typical of his own age, such as the nude torso and the conventional drapery round the lower limbs ; nor is the somewhat sensuous charm of Praxiteles altogether wanting.

The Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican is another famous statue which in former times stood for one of the representative examples of Greek art, but has now been more properly estimated. Nevertheless it is a first-rate work of its kind. The Vatican statue is not indeed an original, being of marble, whereas it is clear, both from the modelling and from the treatment of the drapery, which is strictly impossible in marble, that the original was of bronze. Although there are remains of his bow in the left hand it does not appear that the god was represented in the act of shooting ; the pose of the right hand, with its unstudied ease, implies that no particular action is intended,

unless he may be conceived as having just let fly his arrow.

Modern discoveries of works of the Hellenistic period have not been as numerous as those of an earlier age, but one in particular takes a high rank for its artistic merit. This is the Nike (Victory) of Samothrace, now in the Louvre, a statue which seems to have had considerable reputation in antiquity, as reproductions of it appear on coins of the third century. It is earlier in date than most of the works discussed in this section, for although no record of its artist remains, we know that it was set up by Demetrius Poliorketes to celebrate a naval victory in B.C. 306. The custom of setting up such figures to commemorate victories had long been familiar to the Greeks. The goddess was represented standing on the prow of a ship, blowing a trumpet and holding a trophy; the head and arms, with part of the wings, are now wanting, but there is much to admire in what remains—in the beautiful sweep of the drapery which is blown close round her body by the wind, and floats out beyond on her left side. As a study of a figure in rapid motion it would leave nothing to be desired, were it not that a certain want of repose—one might almost say sensationalism—

mars the effect, and causes it to suffer by comparison with analogous figures of the fifth century.

The year 146 B.C. was a memorable year in the history of Greece, when Corinth was sacked by Mummius and enormous numbers of works of art were destroyed and carried off to Rome. It is of course in no sense accurate to say that Greek art then came to an end and Roman art began; art in Greece proper had been dormant for a century and a half, and during that time Asia Minor had become the centre of culture, while secondly we have seen that in Asia Minor these schools of purely Hellenic, if decadent, art continued to flourish for about a century longer. Nevertheless, to fix this date as the limit of a history of Greek art is not so absurd as it may seem; it was after the events of this year that Greece became a Roman province, and all subsequent efforts of Greek artists were devoted to the service of their new masters. With the migration of many of the most celebrated works of art to Rome and the foundation of new schools for the purpose of reproducing these works in copies, the era of Graeco-Roman art may fairly be said to have opened; and it therefore seems more appropriate to leave for another volume the consideration of its achievements.

## CHAPTER V

### GREEK ARCHITECTURE

Prehistoric architecture—The beginnings of the Temple—  
The Doric style and its characteristics—The Parthenon—  
The Ionic style—Temples at Athens—Ionic temples in  
Asia Minor—The Corinthian style—The monument of  
Lysicrates.

GREEK architecture, like sculpture, owed its development chiefly to its connection with religion ; its history is therefore largely the history of the development of the Greek temple. But the earliest buildings of which we have any knowledge, such as those of the Mycenaean period, are secular rather than religious in character. In the Lion Gate of Mycenae (p. 10) we see the prototype of the Doric column, and in the "Treasury of Atreus" the first attempt at vaulted or arched construction as yet known ; the same may also be said of the galleries at Tiryns, which are virtually an arched passage, but are not so advanced in construction as the beehive tombs,

Many other ancient walls remaining in Greece

were known as Pelasgian, and so far show an advance on the Cyclopean masonry that the blocks are first of all carefully fitted into one another while retaining their irregular form, and finally arranged in parallel straight courses. This method is widely spread over the Mediterranean, and as a matter of fact lasted well into historic times.

The palace discovered at Tiryns is almost the only example preserved to us of early Greek domestic architecture. It is generally agreed that the ground-plan (which is of course all that remains) has preserved for us, though perhaps in a more elaborate form, the typical features of Homer's descriptions. The essential points of similarity are the large forecourt, in which stood the altar of Zeus, the columned vestibule connecting it with the inner buildings, and the principal sitting-room with the hearth in the centre. Beyond this were the women's apartments, which, in accordance with Oriental ideas, were completely isolated from the men's part. The walls of this palace were of unburnt brick on a low plinth of stone, a method which prevailed for some time in Greek architecture, and wooden construction was also largely employed, chiefly for columns and interior details. Clearly the mode of life in

Greece in the days of Homer largely resembled the feudal system of the Middle Ages : the baronial castle or palace, in which the chieftain and his retainers lived a common life, surrounded by mean buildings (of which no traces have been preserved) inhabited by the menial classes or serving as shelter for flocks and herds.

It is however probable that when the excavations at Knossos in Crete are completed and the results properly estimated, our knowledge of architecture in the Mycenaean period will be not only largely increased but in a measure revolutionised. The palace which is in process of being brought to light, and probably represents the world-famed Labyrinth or palace of the semi-mythical Minos, is of vast extent, and surpasses even Tiryns in importance. It has been shown to consist of no less than three storeys, with countless ramifying passages and chambers, staircases, store-rooms, and magazines, from the great throne - room downwards. And that even ordinary domestic architecture was highly advanced in the sixteenth century B.C. is shown by the recent discovery of porcelain models of dwellings of two and three storeys. But it is impossible at present to concede to these

## GREEK ARCHITECTURE 101

marvellous discoveries more than a passing mention.

— In the development of the Greek temple we may observe four distinct stages. The earliest, which is characteristic of the Mycenaean period, is that of the open-air altar, of which we have instances at Mycenae, Tiryns (in the palace forecourt) and Troy. Homer, it is true, speaks of the temple of Pallas at Troy, and of the "stone threshold" at Delphi, but here he is blending a later element with the Mycenaean. At this altar the father of the family or chief of the tribe offered sacrifice.

Next we find buildings in the form of very small stone cells, with a roof of overhanging stones, in which the same principle of a rudimentary vault that was noted at Mycenae and Tiryns is maintained. One example of this method of building remains in an almost perfect state, on Mount Ocha in Euboea. The temple has an opening in the centre of the roof towards which the stones gradually slope forward as they rise, thus forming the vault; it is also supplied with a door and two windows in the front.

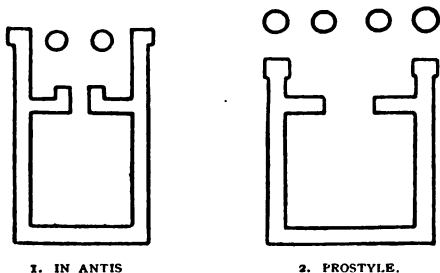
— Thirdly, there is the method of building alluded to in describing the palace at Tiryns, in which the walls are built of unburnt brick on a plinth

of stone, the columns and roof being of wood. The traveller Pausanias in his description of the temple of Hera at Olympia, noted that it was constructed in this fashion, and his statement has been established by excavations. The tiles and other external decorations were of terra-cotta, a very favourite material for this purpose with the Greeks, which remained in favour down to quite late times. The original stone plinth of the Hera temple is still standing, but the columns are gone. Pausanias however tells us that as they decayed they had been replaced by columns of stone, and that only one wooden column existed in his day. Dr. Doerpfeld, the chief authority on ancient architecture, dates this temple about 1000 B.C.

Lastly we come to the period when stone was employed throughout as the material for the main construction, terra-cotta being restricted to tiles and other smaller details. The earliest of these buildings are in the style known as Doric, the typical architectural style of Greece, though in Asia Minor the Ionic style can claim an almost equally early origin.

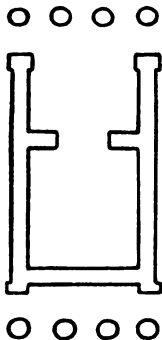
The various kinds of temples in the Doric style are defined and described for us by Vitruvius the architect, who lived in the time of Augustus, and his classification still serves.

Roughly speaking, a Greek temple consists of three parts, the interior chamber or *cella*, the vestibule or porch, and the outer colonnade, and the distinction between the different classes rests on the number and arrangement of the exterior columns. The simplest form of temple, without any columns except two forming the entrance to the vestibule, with square pilasters terminating the side walls, is known as *in antis*

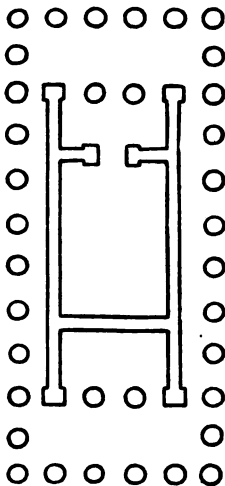


(Fig. 1). The next stage was to place a row of four columns along the front, and this was known as *prostyle* (Fig. 2). When the row of four columns was repeated at the back the temple was called *amphiprostyle*, or "with columns in front at either side" (Fig. 3). The next advance was to place a row of columns along each side in addition, and thus the temple

was completely surrounded with columns, or *peripteral* (Fig. 4). An additional row of columns all round made the temple *dipteral* or "double-winged" (Fig. 5), or if, as some-



3. AMPHIPROSTYLE.

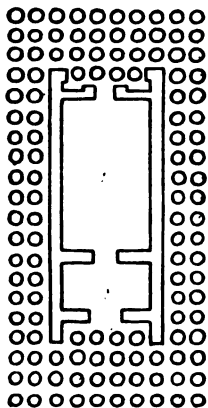


4. HEXASTYLE PERIPTERAL.

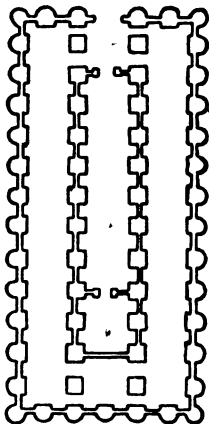
times happened, the inner row was then omitted it was called *pseudo-dipteral*. A rare variety of the peripteral temple was known as *pseudo-peripteral* (Fig. 6), the columns at the sides not standing free but being "engaged" along

the walls, projecting from them to the extent of a semicircle.

Peripteral temples are also classified according to the number of columns on the front, as *tetrastyle* (only occurring in the prostyle



5. DECASTYLE DIPTERAL.



6. PSEUDO-PERIPTERAL.

variety), *hexastyle*, *octostyle*, and so on. It is indeed obvious that no peripteral temple can have less than six columns at front and back; equally, no dipteral or pseudo-dipteral can have less than eight. It was also a rule that the number of side-columns was never less than

double the number on the front. No examples of dipteral temples in the Doric style are known, but they are added here for the sake of completeness. Abnormal buildings are also found in the Doric style, such as the temple at Paestum which is double, with nine columns on the front and a dividing row down the middle, or the Hall of the mystics at Eleusis, which had twelve columns on the front only. The commonest form of Doric temple is hexastyle peripteral, but the Parthenon, the most perfect product of the style, is octostyle.

Remains of Doric temples are found all over Greece and in the Western Mediterranean, and there is one instance in Asia Minor (at Assos). The earliest are those at Corinth and Syracuse, which date from the seventh century, and the best preserved at the present day are to be found at Paestum and in Sicily. In the latter island there are no less than eight at Selinus, ranging from 600 B.C. to about 400 B.C., several having sculptured metopes (see p. 34). The temple at Segesta is very perfect, and at Girgenti (Agrigentum) eleven remain, one of which is quite unique; it is heptastyle pseudo-peripteral, of about 550 B.C., and built on a most colossal scale, with figures of giants supporting the inner columns of the cella.





VIEW OF "THESEION," ATHENS

The fact that a man can stand within one of the flutings of the columns will perhaps give some idea of its scale. At Paestum there are three temples, one nearly perfect.

In Greece itself the principal Doric temples are the two magnificent examples at Athens, the Parthenon and the so-called Theseion, the latter of which is practically complete (Plate XVIII.); the temples at Aegina (see p. 45), at Bassae (Phigaleia) in Arcadia, and of Zeus at Olympia, are more or less well preserved, and all remarkable for their sculptured decoration. That at Aegina is the most typical example of a Doric temple.

— Although deviating in some points from the normal type, by far the most beautiful and interesting of those remaining is the Parthenon, the great temple of Athena on the Acropolis of Athens. It was built on the site of the older temple of Athena which was burnt down at the time of the Persian invasion, and was completed in 438 B.C., the architects being Ictinos and Callicrates. It was of Pentelic marble throughout, and measured 228 by 101 feet, the height being 65 feet. The building consists of a *cella* divided into two chambers, the smaller known as the *opisthodomos* or Parthenon proper, containing sacred vessels,

vestments, and furniture. The main portion of the cella, 100 feet in length, was called the *naos hecatompedos*, and this contained the great statue of Athena the Maiden, sculptured by Pheidias, facing towards the eastern doorway. The surrounding columns numbered eight at the ends and seventeen at the sides.

The present condition of the Parthenon is familiar even to those who have not been privileged to visit the building itself; it may at all events be realised from the model in the Elgin Room of the British Museum. Up to the year 1687 it remained almost intact, except for alterations made by the Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D., in order to convert it into a Christian church. In the above year Athens was bombarded by the Venetians, and the Turks, who were then occupying the city, stored their powder inside it; a bomb from the Venetians fell into the middle, with the result that a large part of the middle of the building was destroyed. In 1801-1803 the sculptures were saved from further destruction by the wise and liberal Lord Elgin, who carried them off to England to their safe resting-place in the British Museum.

— The older temples are built entirely of stone, except so far as painted terra-cotta is used for

tiles, cornices, and such-like decoration, but with the increased quarrying of marble the use of the latter becomes more and more extended. At first only the columns, sculptures, or roof-tiles are of marble ; finally it is used throughout. There is also in the later temples a tendency to mix the styles, as at Tegea and Bassae, where the Ionic and Corinthian orders also occur. Colouring was generally and extensively employed, especially for the ornamental patterns on the mouldings, the palmette, maeander, wave-moulding, egg-and-dart, and acanthus, all being rendered in bright red and blue, picked out with gold, but carefully distributed so that curved surfaces receive curvilinear patterns and flat surfaces rectilinear.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the construction of Doric temples is the use of *optical corrections*, a principle which we find difficult to realise, but one necessitated by the clearness and brilliancy of the Mediterranean atmosphere, which tends to give false impressions of lines and curves to the eye. Thus it was discovered that if a column was designed with a straight line from cap to base, the profile against the sky appeared concave, as if eaten away, and it was necessary to counteract this

by constructing it with a more or less convex outline. In some of the oldest temples this bulge, known as *entasis*, is very marked, even at first sight. Again, all horizontal lines are really slightly convex curves, in order for instance to prevent any appearance of sagging which might be caused by heavy monoliths lying on the tops of columns. Thirdly, the columns are so arranged that their axes slope inwards, at right angles to the sides, except the angle columns which bisect the angles at the corners. It has been calculated that the axes of the Parthenon columns, which are inclined one foot in 150, would meet at a height of 5,856 feet. The effect of this is to give an appearance of stability to the building. Further the angle-columns are made thicker than the others, because otherwise they would *look* smaller, being against the bright background of the sky, than those against the dark background of the building. It is obvious that when these and other adjustments had to be taken into consideration the cutting of the marble became a very complicated affair.

It has generally been supposed, and probably rightly, that the Doric style is derived from architecture in wood. We have already seen that wood was used for columns at Tiryns and

Olympia, and for a long time roofs must have been largely constructed of wood, with terracotta roof-tiles. The derivation of architectural members from wooden prototypes is to be observed in other countries, as in Egypt, where the pillars are copied from bundles of reeds tied together, or from palm trees, and the same is seen in Assyria and Persia. So in the Doric style, the fluting of the columns represents the striated surface of a tree-trunk, the mouldings at the top the metal bands which were placed round the wood to prevent its splitting, and the gabled roof represents the ordinary type of wooden roof with tie-beams and rafters. In this case the triglyphs represent the ends of the rafters with the tie-beam between, to which each pair was nailed, and the metopes are the spaces in between (as the meaning of the word shows). These were afterwards filled in, as were the ends of the gables, and covered with sculptured or painted decoration.

— The Ionic style presents in many respects an interesting contrast to the Doric. Vitruvius aptly compares its proportions to those of a woman, the Doric to those of a man. Not only is it lighter and more graceful, but it is also richer and less severe than Doric, reflect-

ing the characteristics of the more luxurious Ionian races of Asia Minor, to whom it owes its introduction into Greece. Like the Doric style it probably owes much to Oriental influence, and its prototypes may be seen in the columns of Persepolis with their volute-capitals and elsewhere in the East. There is no evidence of an origin from wooden architecture. Though always at home in Asia Minor it never became really naturalised in Greece, and only isolated examples have been found before the middle of the fifth century. That it was used at Athens earlier than 480 B.C. has been shown by recent excavations, and there was also a small temple on the banks of the Ilissos, the scanty remains of which seem to show a transition from one style to the other.

As regards the main points of difference from the Doric style, the most notable is the absence of the triglyphs and metopes, their place being taken by a plain continuous frieze, usually sculptured. The architrave is always broken up into three *fasciae* or sloping bands, one over the other; the columns are smaller and taller in proportion, and optical corrections are mostly disregarded; the intercolumniation is wider, and the slope of the pediment steeper.

The columns invariably have bases, and the flutings are divided by fillets.

The main feature, however, which distinguishes this from the two other orders of Greek architecture is the capital with its volutes. It appears to be derived from a floral termination to a column, the volutes representing curling leaves or sepals of a calyx on either side. These volutes were always very carefully designed, with mathematical accuracy, the centre or "eye" being cut out and filled with gilt bronze or precious stones. By an ingenious device the corner volutes at the angles of the temples are bent forward in order to get one on each side of the angle and avoid the side-view of the capital. In some of the earlier examples of Ionic capitals, represented by the row of columns inside the temple at Phigaleia, the top line between the volutes is not curved downwards as usual, but arched in convex form. The space in between the volutes is generally filled in with what is known as the egg-moulding, very sharply and deeply undercut.

Two of the most beautiful examples of Ionic architecture are the Erechtheion or temple of Athena Polias and Erechtheus, and the temple

of Athena Nike (Victory), formerly called Wingless Victory, on the Acropolis at Athens. The latter is the earlier of the two, and was probably built shortly after the Persian Wars, commemorating the victories of the Athenians therein. It is a very small building, with room for little besides the statue of the goddess, but is exquisitely proportioned. Some of the sculptured friezes were carried off by Lord Elgin and are now in the British Museum; but the beautiful figures of Victories on the stone balustrade in front of the temple, dating from a later period, are preserved on the Acropolis.

The Erechtheion represents the perfection of the Ionic style, though its form is unique. It is practically a double temple, consisting of a *cella* divided into two portions, sacred respectively to Athena Polias and Erechtheus, with an eastern portico of six columns and two large porches each with six columns, on the north and south (Plate XIX.). The latter is the famous porch of the Caryatides, which is familiar to Londoners from the copy of it attached to St. Pancras Church. The six columns, placed on a high plinth or stylobate, are in the form of maidens (the Caryatides) supporting moulded capitals on their heads, on which rests an entablature. One of these is now in the



VIEW OF ERECHTHEION, ATHENS (CARYATID PORCH)



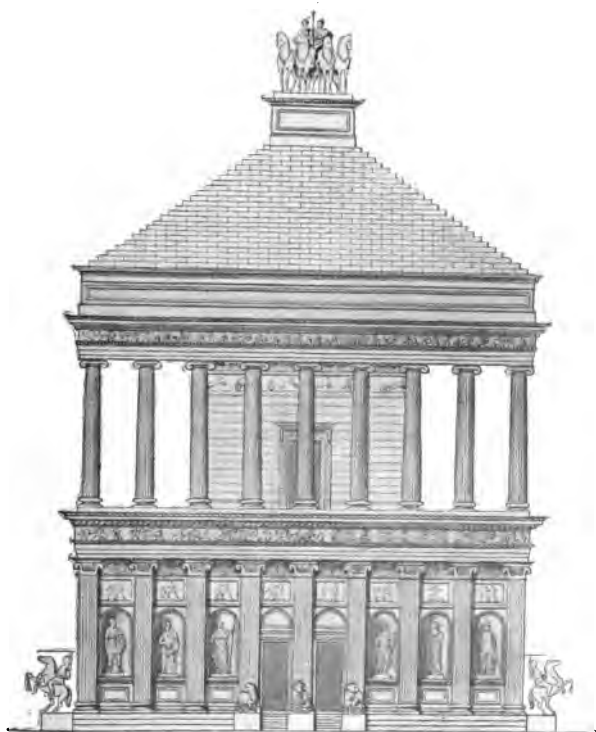
British Museum, and has been replaced by a terra-cotta copy. Round the main building was a frieze in white marble on a black marble background, and the entablature throughout is richly decorated with various patterns.

Some of the Ionic buildings of Asia Minor were of great renown in antiquity, and two of them, the temple of Artemis at Ephesus and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassos, ranked among the wonders of the world. The temples of Apollo at Miletus and Athena at Priene were also of great magnificence. All these are later in date than those of Athens, belonging to the fourth century; but the remains of the earlier temple at Ephesus which contained Croesus' column (see p. 36) were also in this style. A comparison of a capital from this earlier temple (in the Archaic Room of the British Museum) with one of those from the later temple in the Ephesus Room will clearly show the difference brought about in this style in the course of 200 years. Strictly speaking there were three temples built on this site, the first by Theodoros of Samos about 650 B.C., the second by Chersiphron and Metagenes (550-520 B.C.), and the third about 350 B.C., after the destruction of the second by fire on the night that Alexander the Great was born.

The remarkable feature of the third temple was the arrangement of the columns on the façade, in two rows, the lower row coming down on to the steps in front; they stand on huge square bases ornamented with sculpture, and the lowest drums of the columns are also ornamented with sculptured reliefs. The dimensions of the temple were  $342 \times 163$  feet, or at the base of the steps  $418 \times 240$ , and the columns are no less than six feet in diameter. Considerable remains were excavated in 1867-1872 by Mr. J. T. Wood, and are now in the British Museum.

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassos, as is well known, was a monument built by his wife Artemisia in honour of Mausolos, satrap of Caria, about 350 B.C. The architect's name was Pythis or Pythios, and it seems to have remained almost perfect until the sixteenth century. It was excavated by Sir Charles Newton in 1857, and almost all the existing remains are in the British Museum.

Although a long account of this building has been left us by Pliny, and so much of its architectural details has been recovered, its exact form has not so far been definitely ascertained. Pliny's description is not very lucid, but all are agreed that it consisted of a square



RESTORATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM

*By Petersen*



colonnaded edifice on a high base or *podium*, surmounted by a stepped pyramid, on the summit of which stood a four-horse chariot. The total height was about 125 feet, the main portion measuring 180 feet each way. The details of workmanship are of a higher order than most Ionian temples, almost rivalling the Parthenon. The arrangement of the columns and entablature of the central portion may be well seen from a restoration in the British Museum. (See Plate XX. for a complete restoration.)

The Corinthian style came into existence about the beginning of the fourth century. There is no apparent reason for the name, but it may have been given on account of the luxurious and highly ornamented character of the capitals, Corinth being proverbial in antiquity for its wealth and luxury. In general arrangement the order differs little from the Ionic, except for the capitals, which are divided into three tiers of equal height, each tier composed of small volutes (*caulicoli*). At each corner a larger one supported the abacus, which was in the form of a concave-sided square, but all the real weight rested on the centre. Vitruvius tells us that the idea of this

beautiful capital was suggested to the sculptor Callimachos by the sight of a basket on which a tile had been placed, underneath which an acanthus plant had grown out of the basket. But this style was never much used in Greece, and was more popular with the Romans.

The earliest example of Corinthian is in a single column at Phigaleia, inside the temple, and it was also used in the mixed temple at Tegea, and for the inner row of columns in the Tholos at Epidauros, a beautiful circular building of the fourth century connected with the local cult of Asklepios, and noted for its delicate ornamentation. But the finest building in this style is the choragic monument of Lysicrates in the Street of Tripods at Athens, just under the Acropolis. It was intended to support a prize tripod won in a dramatic contest, in which Lysicrates had supplied the chorus, and still remains almost in its entirety. It is a circular structure with six engaged columns round it, but the capitals have only two rows of leaves, showing them to be of an early type. On the architrave is an inscription referring to the circumstances of its erection, from which the date can be ascertained as 335 B.C. Above this is a frieze on which is sculptured the subject of Dionysos turning into dolphins the



**CHORAGIC MONUMENT OF LYSICRATES, ATHENS**



pirates who attacked his ship. The roof of the dome imitated overlapping leaves or scales. Lord Byron is said to have used this building as a study. A view is given on Plate XXI.

Near to this monument stand some columns of another, but much later example of the style, the magnificent temple of Olympian Zeus. It was begun by Peisistratos about 530 B.C., but not continued until 174 B.C., under Antiochus Epiphanes, a Roman named Cossutius being the architect. It was finally completed by the Emperor Hadrian, and was an octostyle dipteral building,  $365 \times 146$  feet in area, surrounded by no less than 104 columns in all. In its scale and decoration it must have rivalled the great temples of Asia Minor.

With regard to the chronology of the three great orders of Greek architecture it must be borne in mind, as Professor Freeman has pointed out, that they did not succeed each other chronologically like the various developments of Gothic architecture, each exclusively representing a certain period. As we have seen, all three orders might be employed in a single building, and the choice of one or the other was partly a matter of mere preference, partly the result of local usages, as in the Ionic style of Asia Minor. In point of fact the only really

Greek architectural style is the Doric; the Ionic and Corinthian got a footing at Athens, but never in Italy or Sicily before Roman times, and neither is Greek in a strict sense.

The buildings which we have discussed in this brief review are almost exclusively temples, or otherwise associated with religious ceremonial or uses, and others might have been mentioned which have equal title to architectural merit, such as the Propylaea of the Acropolis or the great Council-Hall at Megalopolis, to say nothing of the magnificent theatres of Athens, Epidaurus, and Megalopolis which have been so admirably preserved. But the temple may be regarded as the typical Greek building, both for its architectural arrangements and for its associations with the daily life of the people, to whom their religion was of such all-embracing importance.

## CHAPTER VI

### GREEK PAINTING

Technical methods—Early history—Corinthian tablets—  
Tombstones—Polygnotos—Zeuxis and Parrhasios—  
Apelles—Landscapes.

**I**N the writings of ancient authors who deal with the subject of art we find almost as much attention paid to painting as to sculpture; and in fact fuller details of the life and works of some painters, such as Zeuxis or Apelles, than of the great sculptors like Pheidias or Polycleitos. This fact would seem to indicate that in later antiquity at all events painting was placed, if not on a higher level than the sister art, at least on an equality with it; and this in spite of the undoubted tendency of the Greeks to prefer plastic forms as the medium for expressing their artistic ideas. For us moderns, however, the question whether the verdict of the ancient critics was justified remains insoluble, inasmuch as all the master-

pieces of ancient painting have perished ; and though our list of genuine original sculptures may be small and fragmentary, there yet remains enough to work out and establish the chain of development which we have indicated in the foregoing chapters.

The subject of Greek painting, then, cannot be treated with the same fulness or accuracy of knowledge as that of sculpture ; all the material at our command, apart from literary records, consists of the products of minor craftsmen such as vase-painters, or the frescoes and wall paintings of Rome and Pompeii, which at best are but a reflection of the achievements of the great masters, standing hardly as near to their originals as do the Graeco-Roman copies of famous statues. In the present chapter we can only touch briefly on the literary and monumental evidence for painting in the archaic period, which is more satisfactorily dealt with in the chapter on the painted vases ; and then mention what is recorded of the principal artists from the time of Polygnotos down to the Pompeian frescoes of the early Roman period.

Greek paintings may be classified under three main headings : Wall-paintings, Easel-paintings, and Encaustic Work. To these

might perhaps be added a fourth, that of Votive Tablets, which both in character and technique form a link with the minor art of vase-painting. Yet another link is formed by the painted terra-cotta sarcophagi of Asia Minor and Etruria; nor can we overlook the extensive use of painting in sculpture, terra-cotta work, and architecture, though this cannot be discussed within the limits of the present work.

In the case of the first two classes the materials used were probably much the same as those employed by the modern painter, the wall-paintings being of the nature of frescoes, the easel-paintings in *tempera*; while encaustic answered more or less to our oil-paintings. Wall-paintings and frescoes date, as we have seen, from the Mycenaean period, although Homer does not mention them, nor indeed have we any further record of them until the time of Polygnotos (middle of fifth century). During the intervening archaic period it is probable that there was no real separation of art from handicraft; and the only information we can gain about this period beyond vague literary tradition is derived from vase-paintings, and a few other monuments. This art was raised to its highest level by Polygnotos

and his contemporaries, but subsequently subordinated to easel-painting, in which Zeuxis, Parrhasios, and other great masters excelled, only being revived in the age which produced the decorations of the Pompeian houses.

It is not always easy to distinguish the two methods as described by classical writers, but it is probable that for wall-painting a groundwork of wet stucco was usually employed, specially prepared with different qualities of mortar; the colours were laid on with a brush and corresponded to our water-colours, a medium being required for certain pigments. Easel-paintings were also in *tempera* but on a dry ground, whitened wood being a favourite material; canvas was rarely used until late times, as in the mummy-paintings of Egypt under the Empire. Stone and marble were also used for paintings, especially in the form of painted *stelae* or tombstones, of which a few early examples from Greece exist, and others of later date from Amathus in Cyprus. Pausanias describes a painted tombstone by Nicias which he saw at Tritaea in Arcadia. A fine example of painting in *tempera* on marble is to be seen in a sarcophagus of about 300 B.C. found at Corneto in Etruria. The colours used for these purposes were kept

dry and pounded and mixed in a mortar when required for use. It is easy to believe that these water-colour paintings lacked durability, especially as there seems to have been no method of protecting them, such as varnishing, available.

Of encaustic painting we really know little, and the accounts are as usual ambiguous. The main principle was the laying on of colour by means of a brush or bronze pencil, with a medium of heated liquid wax, with which the colours were ground in ; the ground was usually wood, sometimes ivory. It was regarded as a tedious and difficult process, and only used for small pictures ; those done on ivory may have resembled our miniatures. The process may have originated in Egypt, the climate of which was better suited to it.

The earliest paintings found on Greek soil, the Cretan and Mycenaean frescoes, stand quite by themselves, and have no bearing on the subsequent development of the art in Greece. It is on the other hand probable that the Mycenaean painted pottery exercised a decided influence on the early art of Asia Minor, where the Ionian school of art had a firm footing in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. As early as 710 B.C. we hear of a picture of a battle by

one Bularchos, which Candaules the King of Lydia purchased for its weight in gold. Two hundred years later, about 515, Mandrocles of Samos painted another historical picture representing Dareios watching the passage of his army over the Bosphorus.

The point which Ionian painting reached in the sixth century is marked by a group of monuments which are almost our only specimens of archaic Greek paintings on any considerable scale. These are a series of large terra-cotta coffins or sarcophagi found at Clazomenae on the gulf of Smyrna and ranging in date from about 600 to 500 B.C. Usually the decoration is confined to the broad flat rim of the sarcophagus, but there is a magnificent example in the British Museum with a gable-shaped cover, which is almost completely covered with paintings inside and out. They consist of battle-scenes, funeral-games, and chariot-races, groups of Sphinxes, and bands of ornamental patterns, all painted in black silhouette on a creamy-white ground (Plate XXII.). They show throughout interesting points of comparison with the contemporary vases.

On the mainland of Greece the chief centre of painting was undoubtedly Corinth, with which city and its neighbour Sicyon most of



PAINING FROM ARCHAIC SARCOPHAGUS



the early literary traditions are connected. Excavations at Corinth have yielded large quantities of early vases, and there is no doubt that the commercial supremacy it enjoyed in the seventh and sixth centuries also implied a supremacy in the various branches of painting. A very instructive find for the early history of painting is a series of votive tablets discovered in 1879 on the site of a shrine of Poseidon, the patron of the city. The figures are painted in black and purple on a creamy-white ground; the style is rude, yet full of originality, and the subjects of an advanced nature. They mostly bear inscriptions which render it possible to date them about 650-550 B.C. These tablets are real pictures, and invaluable as showing on a small scale what the painter of the period could achieve. Ancient writers such as Pliny mention numerous painters of early date whom they connect with Ionia and Corinth, but their ideas are very confused, and though some of their supposed inventions may be accounted for by developments seen in vase-paintings, we may safely say that on this subject ancient writers knew even less than we do to-day.

The earliest traditions connected with Athens speak of one Eumaios who "distinguished male from female and imitated all sorts of

figures." His date is disputed, some placing him in the time of Solon (about 600-590), others more towards the end of the sixth century. He may however be connected with the introduction of a distinct pigment to represent the flesh of women, like the white used on Attic black-figured vases (see p. 152). The last traditional name is that of Kimon of Cleonae (about 520-500 B.C.), who made great advances. His chief distinction was the invention of *catagrapha*, a term probably best explained as some kind of foreshortening or perspective.

The great paintings of this period (550-500 B.C.) were probably outline drawings with washes of colour. There are two monuments at Athens which are fairly illustrative of such a process, both dating from the last quarter of the sixth century. One is the tombstone of Lyseas (Pl. XXIII.), with his portrait painted in *tempera*, holding a wine-cup and lustral branch. The ground is red, and the figure is clad in a purple tunic and white mantle with coloured border; the branch is green, the cup black. The other is a marble disc with the seated figure of a physician named Aineos, painted in similar fashion. Both of these show a great advance in technique compared with the contemporary





vases. With these may be ranked a votive terra-cotta tablet found on the Acropolis at Athens, with a figure of a warrior in black on a white ground; it is of the same date and gives perhaps the best idea of sixth-century painting at Athens (Plate XXIII.).

It is not until we have reached the stage at which the art of vase-painting has attained its zenith that the history of painting proper emerges from the obscurity of tradition into the light of trustworthy records. The name with which this epoch is above all others associated is that of Polygnotos, a native of Thasos, who occupies the same place in regard to Painting as Pheidias in regard to Sculpture. But it must be remembered that the art did not attain to perfection under Polygnotos; the spirit of his work is the same idealising and ennobling spirit that characterises the contemporary master, but he had not like Pheidias the complete mastery over technical processes, which in regard to painting was not fully attained for another century. His real achievement was to separate the art from the handicraft and to mark the epoch at which the independent history of Greek painting begins. Hence it was said by one writer that he "invented" painting.

The impetus to the new movement was given

K

by the changes at Athens under Kimon and Pericles, when public buildings were being erected to commemorate great events (see p. 49), and it was deemed appropriate to decorate them with great historical or mythological compositions, both in marble and in fresco. Hence artists like Polygnotos were attracted to Athens and became public characters; his artistic career extends over the period from 475-430 B.C., and he became the head of a school which included two other famous painters, Panaenos and Mikon. His chief work was the decoration of the Lesche or Assembly Room at Delphi, the subjects being the Sack of Troy and a Vision of Hades. Of these we have a full description by Pausanias, which has enabled scholars (aided by carefully selected vase-paintings) to make a fairly probable reconstruction of the whole.

The figures were arranged in friezes but at different levels, without any regular background or foreground, and each group was quite distinct though not without its bearing on the main subject. Each figure was inscribed with its name; but details of landscape and so on were probably only roughly indicated by symbols. In spite of a want of pictorial unity and the limitations imposed by archi-

tectural considerations, the painter appears to have been able to give full scope to his powers in details of style and treatment of the subjects. We are told that he combined the strength and firmness of archaic work with breadth of style and feeling for subjective beauty. He was essentially a character-painter, as Aristotle has described him, and his efforts to impart individuality to his figures effected a real revolution in his art, which Pliny hints at when he says that Polygnotos "opened the mouth and gave expression to the countenance by abolishing archaic stiffness." Aristotle says that he painted men greater than they are, while Dionysios and Pauson (two of his contemporaries) painted them respectively as they are and worse than they are. And a Greek epigram says of his figure of Polyxena in a painting at Athens that "the whole Trojan war might be read in her eyes."

This was all the more remarkable, seeing that technical knowledge was still so backward. The colours for instance were limited to four—black, white, red, and yellow—with such varieties as could be obtained by mixing; and they were only laid on in flat tints without gradations and without any suggestion of light-and-shade effect, or of true perspective.

They produced, in fact, coloured drawings rather than genuine paintings. Of the general appearance of Polygnotos' paintings we may probably gain some idea from the fifth-century vases with polychrome designs on white ground (see p. 161); but his style and method of composition are better reflected in the later red-figured vases with pictorial treatment, and in some sculptured monuments.

Two painters of importance who belong to the end of this fifth century are Agatharchos of Samos and Apollodoros. The former was chiefly noted as a scene-painter, and is said to have worked in this capacity for Aeschylus; he also decorated the house of Alcibiades. Apollodoros is regarded by Pliny as the highest representative of Greek painting, and there is no doubt that he was responsible for perhaps the most important technical advance made up to the time, namely, the introduction of light-and-shade effects and gradations of colour. This virtually implied the abandonment of colour-drawing and the creation of the genuine art of painting; and he may be regarded as the first Greek picture-artist, inasmuch as his work possessed organic unity, *i.e.* all parts alike contributed to hold the eye. He aimed at pictorial illusion, and painted men "as they

seemed to be"; Pliny says that he opened the portals of art to Zeuxis, his great successor.

The fourth century witnessed a great change in pictorial art. As was to a great extent the case with sculpture, the adornment of public buildings no longer called for the artist's chief efforts, and the easel-picture of domestic art takes the place of the monumental fresco. We now begin to perceive the influence of the Drama, which freed painting from the trammels of sculptural influence, a result perhaps largely brought about by Agatharchos and displayed at first in its technique rather than in the choice of subjects.

The great names of the first half of this century are Zeuxis (420-380 B.C.) and Parrhasios (slightly later in date). The former was a native of Herakleia in Southern Italy, but settled at Ephesus after travelling all over Greece. Pliny gives a long list of his works, one of the most famous being a representation of the infant Herakles strangling the snakes, another, a family of Centaurs. We can of course only judge of him by the criticisms of ancient writers, but there is a painting in the house of the Vettii at Pompeii, which may give an idea of the first-named picture, as well as a vase-painting. In comparing him with

Polygnotos it is urged that he was neither a historical painter nor a student of *ethos* or character, but preferred striking situations and novel effects. It is recorded that on one of his pictures he placed the inscription "It is easier to criticise than to imitate." He was also fond of producing illusions, as is testified by the well-known story of the bird and the bunch of grapes.

Parrhasios was an Ephesian who became an Athenian citizen, and of his pictures, mainly mythological, we have a long list, at the head of which stands his personification of the Athenian Demos, in which its chief characteristics were all brought out. His technique was much elaborated and refined, and in the choice of subjects he was largely influenced by Euripides. It is of him that the story is told that he painted a curtain which his rival requested him to remove in order to view the picture itself. Contemporary with these two was Timanthes, a man of great inventive genius, who painted a famous picture of Iphigenia in which the various gradations of grief among the persons depicted were expressed with much subtilty. This is almost the first instance of a masterpiece of descriptive painting of which we have a record.

On the whole, however, the work of the period, in spite of the great technical advances, shows considerable decline in nobility of conception from the time of Polygnotos.

With the age of Alexander the Great we reach the time of the great Apelles, regarded by the ancients as the highest point attained by Greek painting. He was probably a native of Asia Minor, but lived in various parts of Greece, and at one time was in great favour at the court of Alexander the Great, where he enjoyed the same exclusive privileges as Lysippos. The period during which he worked was practically coincident with the second half of the fourth century. Among the list of pictures recorded under his name there is a large proportion of portraits and allegorical subjects, but not a few are mythological in their scope, such as the famous painting of Aphrodite rising from the sea (Anadyomene), which was made for the temple of Asklepios at Kos, and carried off to Rome by Augustus. He used a living model for the figure of the goddess, who was depicted rising half out of the waves and wringing the water out of her hair.

Among his allegorical subjects the best known is a painting of Calumny, a seated

man with long ears, surrounded by Slander, Envy, Ignorance, and other personifications, as Lucian describes it. Of Alexander the Great he painted a famous portrait for the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, in a sort of *chiaro-oscuro* or Rembrandt style; the conqueror was represented with the attribute of Zeus, the thunderbolt. Many other portraits of the great king are also recorded.

Apelles painted almost exclusively in *tempera*, and his technical skill was extraordinary, especially in light-and-shade effects, in flesh-tones, and in the drawing of lines, which as we know from his famous saying, *Nulla dies sine linea*, he was always practising. He was proud of the grace of his work, which seems to have been its especial distinction, but thought his contemporary Protogenes a better painter. Numerous anecdotes are told about him, some of which are very familiar to us, such as the story of the cobbler and his last, or that of his visit to Protogenes, on whose wall he drew a fine circle which the latter artist eclipsed by drawing a finer one over it.

His contemporary and rival Protogenes was a native of Kaunos on the coast of Caria. He is said to have been very poor, and to have earned a living by decorating the prows of

ships. He lived and worked chiefly at Rhodes, where he painted a picture of Ialysos, a personification of one of the cities of the island, hunting with his dog. In connection therewith the story is told of his accidentally obtaining the effect of the foam on the dog's mouth by throwing a sponge in despair at his picture. This story is also told of Apelles painting a horse. He painted a picture of the Paralos or state ship which hung in the Propylaea, the National Gallery of Athens, and also wrote treatises on painting. He is spoken of as having given a very high finish to his pictures, which concerned themselves for the most part with sensational and dramatic or homely *genre* subjects.

Another painter of the period who ranked very high was Antiphilos, an artist who illustrates the tendency to *genre* in the Hellenistic period; some of his pictures, such as that of a boy blowing up a fire, and a woman preparing wool, would probably remind us of Teniers and the Dutch schools of the seventeenth century.

The record of Greek painting is for the most part a dry and unsatisfying list of names and a *rechauffé* of more or less trustworthy criticisms; nor can we ever hope to find ourselves in a better position in this respect.

From time to time, however, monuments are brought to light which afford a glimmer of light on the subject, such as the great mosaic representing Alexander and Darius at the battle of the Issos, which no doubt reflects some great painted composition of earlier date, or the charming easel-paintings of Herculeum which also go back to older originals. Among these there is a pretty example of the daughters of Pandaros playing at the game of knuckle-bones, signed by Alexander of Athens; the red outlines of the figures alone remain, but sufficient to indicate the grace of the drawing (Plate XXIV.).

The only real advance made in painting subsequently to the fourth century is in landscape, which by the end of the Hellenistic period had progressed far from the days of Polygnotos, when it was merely indicated, as on the painted vases. In the Pompeian wall-paintings and others of the period, as in the scenes from the *Odyssey* found on the Esquiline at Rome, and in some of the representations of the death of Icaros, it is represented with great success; and in the later remains from Pompeii it reached a very elaborate stage of development, but one that belongs more to the consideration of painting as a branch of Roman Art.



**GIRLS PLAYING KNUCKLEBONES  
(HERCULANEUM PAINTING)**

*From Robert*



## CHAPTER VII

### GREEK VASES

Uses of Greek Vases—Technical methods—Shapes—Classification—Ionian and Corinthian pottery—Black-figured vases—Red-figured vases—The Decadence.

**I**T may perhaps be advisable to preface this chapter with a word of warning as to the popular use of the term "Etruscan" in reference to the painted vases of the Greeks. This idea arose in the eighteenth century, when Etruria was almost the only region in which they had been found, and although even then strongly combated, was so stoutly upheld by Italian scholars with patriotic instincts that it has since held its ground with all the tenacity of such popular errors. It is only necessary nowadays to visit the museum at Athens, where hundreds of painted vases, all similar in form, technique, and subject to those found in Italy have been collected together from exclusively Hellenic sites, to prove the utter baselessness

of the old Etruscan theory. In point of fact there was no branch of art in which the Etruscans showed themselves so unsuccessful as in that of painted pottery, as the few remains of genuine Etruscan products clearly show. The fact that the great majority of painted vases of the best period have been found in the tombs of Etruria, and especially at Vulci, can only be explained by supposing that they happened to catch the taste of Italian noblemen and others for whose benefit they were imported in large numbers so long as the fashion prevailed.

The purposes for which painted vases were used by the ancients have been somewhat disputed; but the fact of their being so largely found in tombs tends to show that this was a main object of their manufacture. In regard to some classes this was undoubtedly their exclusive object, as the subjects depicted on them imply, apart from other evidence. Such are the Athenian polychrome *lekythi* and many of the late vases of Southern Italy. It is curious that there is hardly more than one passage in classical writers which alludes to these vases, in spite of the large part they seem to have played in Greek artistic and daily life. Aristophanes, however, speaks of one who

painted *lekkythi* with figures for the dead, and Pindar sings of the decorated prize-vases won by the victors in the Panathenaic games; for the rest, the vases must speak for themselves.

In connection with funeral ceremonies they were doubtless placed round the corpse when it was laid out for burial, and filled with oil and fragrant perfumes; then, as the painted funeral vases sometimes indicate, they were ranged on or round the tomb; and finally, a varying number were placed inside the tomb round the corpse. The primary reason of this was the universal belief of the Greeks, as of other nations, that the dead required in a future existence all the objects of which they made use in their daily life. In some cases the vases appear to have been deliberately broken, with the idea that the dead person could only use what was "dead" also.

In daily life it is probable that the use of painted vases was largely analogous to the modern use of china. The ordinary household utensils, such as drinking-cups, wine-jugs, and pitchers for fetching water, would be made of earthenware, *i.e.* of plain pottery unpainted and often unglazed, while the more valuable and elaborate specimens would be applied to the decoration of the house, or only used on

special occasions. Some shapes are obviously adapted for hanging up against a wall ; while the fact that on many of the later vases the decoration of one side is markedly inferior to the other seems to show that they were placed where only one side was to be seen. Certain vases, again, were given as prizes in the games (see above) ; others with complimentary inscriptions may have been given as presents.

Although hardly applying to the painted vases, it may be worth while to allude to another use made by the Greeks of their pottery, in the Athenian system of ostracism (so called from *ostrakon*, a potsherd, *lit.* oyster-shell), in which the names of those persons whom it was desired to banish were inscribed on fragments of pottery. Some of these have been preserved to us, bearing the names of such well-known personages as Themistocles, and Xanthippos, the father of Pericles.

The clay for the painted vases was largely obtained from Cape Kolias, in Attica, and from the neighbourhood of Corinth, and the prevalent reddish hue of the Attic vases was produced by an admixture of red ochre. At Athens there was a regular potters' quarter, known as the Ceramicus, which adjoined the chief burial-ground, and was therefore con-

venient for the making of vases for funeral purposes.

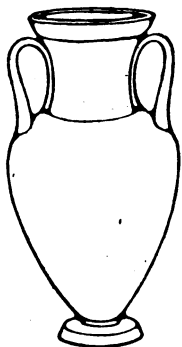
The earliest Greek vases are hand-made, but the potter's wheel had been known in Egypt at a very remote period, and even in Greece was credited with a legendary origin. Hence we can trace the introduction of wheel-made vases even in the Mycenaean period, and thereafter the only ones made by hand were jars of abnormal size.

When the clay had received the required form the surface was carefully smoothed, and the vase placed in the air to dry ; the handles were then separately attached. The next process was the baking, a very critical one, owing to the necessity of accurately adjusting the amount of heat required. Some vases may be seen to have been subjected to too much or too little heat, and to have become discoloured. The ovens for baking seem to have differed little from those in use at the present day.

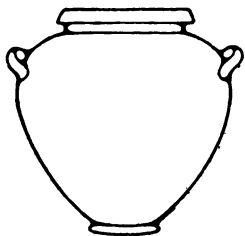
The vase having successfully passed through the baking, the next process was the decoration, which, as we shall see, varied at different periods. It may however be briefly noted here that in the Attic vases, which form a vast proportion of those in existence, the usual method was to cover the surface of the vase

with a highly-polished red glaze. In the earlier or black-figured vases the figures and ornaments were painted on this with a lustrous black pigment or varnish, producing silhouettes, in which the details were brought out by means of engraved lines or the application of white and purple pigments. Another method was to cover the whole of the vase with the black varnish except a square panel (or two where both sides were decorated) which was left in red to receive the figures. This was virtually the method adopted in the succeeding periods, when the reverse system of red figures on a black ground became fashionable; with this difference, that the vase now became entirely black except for the figures, which were left in the colour of the clay. After a second firing to fix the colours the vase was regarded as complete.

The accompanying illustrations are intended to give a notion of the most typical forms favoured by the Greek potters; but each form usually varies at different periods, sometimes more, sometimes less, and some again are only found in early or in late times. The *amphora* (1) and *stamnos* (2) were two-handled jars used for storing wine or food; the *krater* or mixing-bowl (3) held the mixture of wine and water



1. AMPHORA.



2. STAMNOS.



L 3. KRATER.



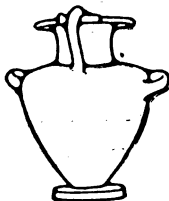
4. KYATHOS.



5. OINOCHOË.



6. LEBES.



7. HYDRIA.

for banquets, from which it was drawn out by means of a ladle (*kyathos*) (4) and poured out for the guests from the *oinochoë* (5), which resembled the modern beer-jug. The *lebes* (6) was placed on a stand or tripod and used for boiling water; the *hydria* (7), a three-handled pitcher for carrying water from the well, as often depicted on the vases. The shapes of Greek drinking-cups are as a rule exceedingly beautiful, especially in the red-figure period; the chief varieties are the *kylix* or goblet (8), the *kotyle* or beaker (9), the *kantharos* or wine-cup (10), and the *rhyton* or drinking-horn (11), usually fashioned in the form of an animal's head. The *phiale* (12), a shallow bowl, was used for libations. The *lekythos* (13) and its varieties the *alabastron* (14), *aryballos* (15), and *askos* (16), were used, especially by athletes, for holding oil, and always had a narrow neck to enable it to pour out slowly. The last shape that need be mentioned here is the *pyxis* or toilet-box (17), usually of cylindrical form, and used by ladies to hold unguents or objects for the toilet.

It may be found convenient, before discussing the historical and artistic development of Greek vase-painting, to summarise briefly the main classes into which they may be divided.



8. KYLIX.



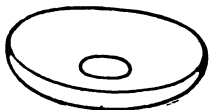
9. KOTYLE.



10. KANTHAROS.



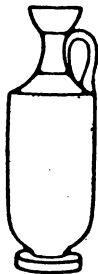
11. RHYTON.



12. PHIALE.



14. ALABASTRON.



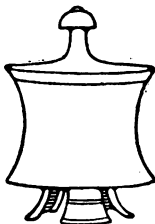
13. LEKYTHOS.



15. ARYBALLOS.



16. ASKOS.



17. PYXIS.

I. *Vases of the Primitive Period*, from about 2000 B.C. to 600 B.C. ; decoration in brown or black (usually dull, not lustrous), on a ground varying from white to pale red, often unglazed ; ornaments chiefly linear, floral, or figures of animals ; human figures and mythological scenes very rare.

II. *Black-figured vases*, from about 600 B.C. to 500 B.C. ; figures painted in lustrous black on glazed ground varying from cream-colour to bright orange-red, with engraved lines and white and purple for details ; subjects mainly from mythology and legend.

III. *Red-figured vases*, from 520 to 400 B.C. ; figures drawn in outline on red clay and the background wholly filled in with black varnish ; inner details indicated by painted lines or dashes of purple and white ; scenes from daily life or mythology. With these are included vases with polychrome figures on white ground. In these, which are exclusively made at Athens, the perfection of vase-painting is reached, between 480 and 450 B.C.

IV. *Vases of the Decadence*, from 400 to 200 B.C. ; mostly from Southern Italy ; technique as in Class III., but drawing free and careless, and general effect gaudy ; subjects funereal,

theatrical, and fanciful. At the end of this period painted vases are largely replaced by plain glazed vases modelled in various forms or with decoration in relief.

As some allusion has already been made in a previous chapter to the earliest painted pottery found on Greek soil, we may resume our account at the point when Greek art in general was beginning to assume a definite and individual character. In the seventh century B.C. two main influences were at work, developing the art of the race along two distinct though not widely different lines, which made themselves felt respectively on the eastern and western sides of the Aegean Sea. On the one hand we have the Ionian races, the heirs of Mycenaean culture, and the principal translators of Oriental art into a Greek setting; on the other, the Athenians, still backward yet even at this time showing promise of coming greatness, and Corinth, the great commercial centre of the period and the main producer and exporter of painted vases.

In Ionia, including the islands of the Aegean such as Rhodes and Samos, and the colonies which owed their origin to Asia Minor, such as Naukratis in the Egyptian Delta, the art of vase-painting from the first carried on the

Mycenaean tradition, and was distinguished by its naturalism and originality, and by the bold and diverse effects produced by variety of colour or novelty of subject. In its earlier phases the ornamentation is more or less elementary, consisting of friezes of animals, especially lions, deer, and goats. These figures stand out sharply in black against the creamy-white ground which is a notable characteristic of nearly all Ionian pottery, and details are brought out by means of engraved lines, patches of purple pigment, or by drawing parts of the figure, especially the head, in outline on the clay ground. Another characteristic is the general use of small ornaments such as rosettes and crosses, in great variety of form, to cover the background of the designs and obviate the necessity of leaving vacant spaces, so abhorrent to the early Greek mind. It is probable that this system of decoration owes much to Assyrian textile fabrics.

The best example of early Ionic pottery is a remarkable plate (*pinax*) from Rhodes in the British Museum, on which is represented the combat of Menelaos and Hector over the body of Euphorbos; the names are inscribed over the figures, and this is the earliest known instance of a mythological subject on a painted



EARLY IONIC VASE-PAINTINGS

*From Baumeister*

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vase. It is a reminiscence rather than an illustration of Homer, a noticeable feature in early vases, which seldom follow literary sources at all closely. The date of this painting is not later than 600 B.C. (Plate XXV.).

One class of Ionic vases deserves special mention for its original character and the interest of its subjects. This is a series of cups painted in black and purple on a white ground, the designs in the interior (Pl. XXV.). They date from the early part of the sixth century, and although none have been found there, evidence points to their being made at Cyrene in North Africa. The most remarkable is a cup in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, representing Arkesilaos, King of Cyrene from 580 to 550 B.C., weighing out bales of the silphium plant (*asafetida*) for exportation in a ship. This plant was a product of the country and a great source of its revenue, and is represented on many of the coins.

We turn now to Western Greece, where we find Corinth almost monopolising the industry of pottery for some 150 years. The vases of Corinth, of which large numbers have been found in the locality, often bearing inscriptions in the peculiar Corinthian alphabet, show a continuous development from the simplest

ornaments to fully-developed black-figured vases hardly to be distinguished from Attic wares. In the earliest specimens, as in those of Ionia, Oriental influence is very strong, the surface being so crowded with rosettes and other subsidiary ornaments that the main design is hardly visible and the background almost disappears. The general effect is that of a rich Oriental embroidery; and the subjects are largely chosen from the fantastic and monstrous creations of Assyrian art, such as the Sphinx and Gryphon. The vases are mostly small and decorated with one or two figures of animals or monsters; the ground varies from cream to yellow and the figures are black with a lavish use of purple for details.

But before the growing sense that human action is the most appropriate subject for the vase-painter, Orientalism begins to give way; the ground-ornaments diminish and disappear; the friezes of animals are restricted to the borders of the designs; and human figures are introduced, first singly, then in friezes or groups, and finally engaged in some definite action, such as combats or hunting-scenes. In the last stage Greek myths and legends are freely employed. A new development, which was traditionally associated with Eumaios (see

p. 128), was the distinguishing of female figures by the use of white for flesh-tints.

Meanwhile a somewhat similar development, though represented by comparatively few vases, was going on at Athens, where the adoption of Corinthian and Ionian technical improvements evolved by the middle of the sixth century the fully-developed black-figure style which by degrees supplanted or assimilated all the other schools. The impetus to this advance was no doubt due to the beneficent rule of the tyrant Peisistratos and his successors (565-510 B.C.), which did so much for culture and art at Athens.

At the head of the new development stands the famous François vase in the museum at Florence, which was found by M. François at Chiusi in 1844. Its shape is that of a *krater* or mixing-bowl, and it bears the signatures of its maker and decorator in the form "Ergotimos made me, Klitias painted me," the first of a long series of signed Athenian vases, though in Boeotia and at Corinth signatures had already been known from several instances. It might be described as a Greek mythology in miniature, with its numerous friezes and panels of figures, comprising such subjects as the return of Hephaestos to Olympos, the

wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the landing of Theseus at Naxos with Ariadne, and a combat of Greeks and Centaurs. All the figures have their names inscribed.

The drawing on black-figured vases is somewhat stiff and conventional, though a great advance in the direction of freedom was attempted before the style went out. One of its chief features is the tendency to give tapering extremities to human figures, which at times is absurdly exaggerated. Many vases, otherwise carefully and delicately executed, are marred by an excess of mannerism and affectation, as in the works of the artists Amasis and Exekias. The treatment of drapery is a good indication of date, ranging from flat masses of colour to oblique flowing lines or angular falling folds.

The chief interest of black-figured vases is really derived from their subjects, which range over every conceivable field; the proportion of myth and legend to scenes from daily life is much greater than in the succeeding styles. They include groups of Olympian and other deities and the various scenes in which they take part, such as the battle of the gods and giants; Dionysos and his attendant Satyrs, Maenads, etc.; the labours and exploits of



**BLACK-FIGURED VASES, BY EXEKIAS AND NIKOSTHENES**

*From Baumeister*

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Herakles and other heroes; subjects taken from the tale of Troy and other less familiar myths; and scenes from daily life, battle-scenes, athletics, the chase, and so on. The same classification of course holds good for the later periods of vase-painting, except that the proportion of *genre* scenes is greater, and that some myths disappear, others rise into prominence; and new deities, such as Eros (Love) and Nike (Victory), appear for the first time.

Among the favourite subjects with the painters of the black-figure period are the Birth of Athena from the head of Zeus (see p. 61); the encounters of Herakles with the Nemean lion, with the triple-bodied Geryon (Pl. XXVI.), or with the Amazons, and the conveying of the hero by Athena in her chariot to heaven; Theseus slaying the Minotaur, Perseus beheading the Gorgon, and Peleus wrestling with Thetis; Greek warriors playing at draughts, and the ambushade of Achilles for Troilos and Polyxena.

A remarkable feature in all such scenes is that a stereotyped form of composition is invariably adopted, at least for the principal figures; but minor variations are generally to be found, as for instance in the number of bystanders, and it is almost an impossibility

to find any two vase-paintings that are exact duplicates. The form of the composition was partly determined by the field available for the design; when this took the form of a long frieze, the space was filled up with a series of spectators or by repeating the typical groups; but when the design is on a framed panel or confined by ornamental patterns the method of treatment is adapted from that of a sculptured metope, and the figures limited to two or three. In many cases it is difficult to decide, in the absence of inscriptions, whether a scene has a mythological signification or not; the mythological types are over and over again adopted for scenes of ordinary life, even to the divine attributes or poses of certain figures.

Among the artists of the period who have left their names on the vases, besides those already mentioned, the most conspicuous is Nikosthenes, a painter of some originality, from whose hand we have over seventy examples, a few being in the red-figure method (Plate XXVI.). He is supposed to have introduced at Athens a revival of the Ionic fashion of painting on a cream-coloured ground instead of red, of which some very effective examples have been preserved. Many of the signed vases are cups bearing nothing more than the artist's name

and some appropriate motto, such as "Welcome and drink deep."

The sudden reversal of technical method involved in the change from black figures on red ground to red figures on black is not at first sight easy of explanation. We have examples of artists like Nikosthenes, who used both methods, sometimes on the same vase, and there is no doubt that the two went on for some years concurrently. As however no intermediate stage is possible, there is no question of development or gradual transition. The new style was in fact a bold and ingenious invention. On account of the great advance in drawing which most of the red-figured vases exhibit, as compared with the black, they were formerly dated late in the fifth century, contemporaneously with Pheidias and Polygnotos. But since the excavations on the Acropolis of Athens have yielded numerous fragments belonging quite to the height of the red-figure period, which must be earlier than 480 B.C., it has become necessary to find an earlier date for its commencement. This is now usually placed at about 520 B.C., in the age of the Peisistratids.

It may be as well here to restate briefly the

method used in the production of these vases, as follows. The artist sketched his design on the red clay with a fine-pointed tool ; he then surrounded the figures with a layer of black varnish about an eighth of an inch wide, by means of a brush ; this prevented the varnish subsequently laid on over the surface of the whole vase from running over the design. Finally inner details, such as features or folds of drapery, were added with a brush, or perhaps a kind of pen, in fine black lines ; and further details were expressed by a wash of black thinned out to brown, or by the application of white and purple pigments.

The red-figure period is usually subdivided into four, showing the chief stages of development, known as the *severe*, *strong*, *fine*, and *late fine* periods. It will be convenient to consider each of these separately, noting in each case the chief exponents of the art.

In the *severe* period it is important to notice that there is no marked advance on the black-figured vases as regards style. The figures are still more or less stiff and conventional, and some of the vases even show signs of the same decadence as the latest black-figured. The real development is partly in a technical direction, partly in the introduction of new

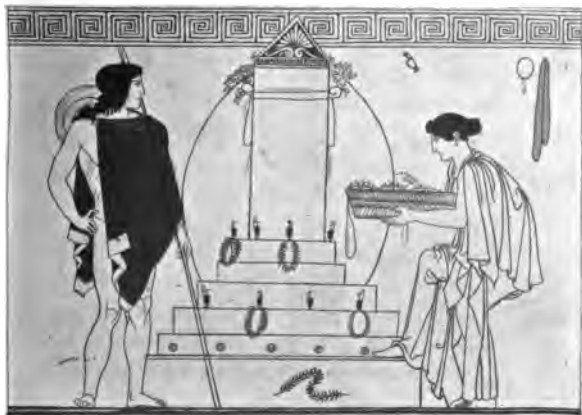
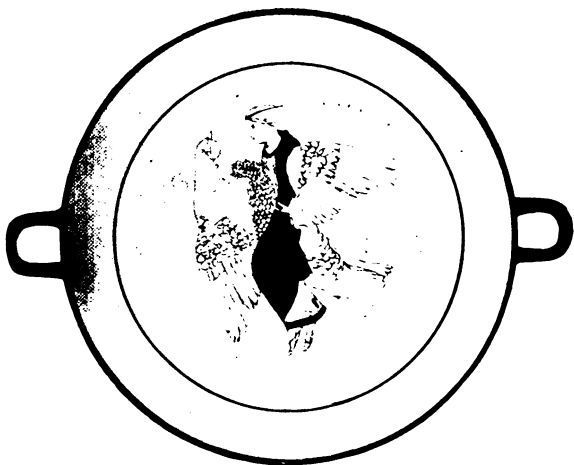
subjects. It was moreover largely confined to one shape, the *kylix* or goblet, the perfecting of which as a work of decorative art was the great glory of the earlier red-figure artists, and for some shapes, such as the *hydria* and *lekythos*, the old method was still preferred. The most typical artist of this period was Epiktetos.

The *strong* period centres round the name of Euphronios, with whom we must associate a really great artistic movement. He never tires of inventing new subjects or new poses, or of attempting to conquer technical and artistic difficulties, and he may be held to represent the stage of development in painting traditionally associated with Kimon of Cleonae (see p. 128), who "introduced variety of expression, indicated folds of drapery, and invented foreshortening, representing figures looking up, down, and backwards." It is needless to say that this marks a very great advance on the old limitations of figures in profile, to which the black-figure silhouettes were confined. Hitherto no advance had been made beyond the conventionality of Egyptian art, in which though the body may be to the front the face is always in profile. But from the time of Euphronios (500-460 B.C.) onwards we observe

the rapid advance of linear drawing to a perfect freedom. His most notable contemporaries were Duris, Hieron (Pl. XXVII.), and Brygos.

In the *fine* style (460-440 B.C.) breadth of effect and dignity are aimed at, and although the cups reached their zenith under the great masters of the last stage, yet for the red-figured vases on the whole, this may be regarded as exhibiting the perfection of technique and drawing, free from archaism, yet without any signs of degeneration. In many of the larger vases the scenes are of a pictorial character, with landscape accessories and groups of figures ranged at different levels; and we may perhaps see in these a reflection of the influence of the painter Polygnotos, now at the height of his activity. The signed vases in this stage are few in number; there is on the other hand a decided reaction in favour of mythological subjects.

In the *late fine style*, which begins about 440 B.C., the pictorial effect is preserved, but the vases rapidly deteriorate in merit; the love of over-refinement and the newly-acquired skill in drawing impel the artist to produce hurried, careless compositions, crowded scenes, and groups of figures without merit or interest. The fashion also arose of enhancing the designs



VASES WITH FIGURES ON WHITE GROUND Digitized by Google



means of accessory colours, such as white and red on in masses, blue and green, and even gilding. Athletic and mythological subjects retire into the background, and the life of women and children come more to the front, especially on the smaller vases, some of which seem to have been used as playthings.

Contemporary with the red-figure method is one in which the figures are painted on a white slip or *engobe* resembling pipe-clay, with which the whole surface was covered ; the figures are either in outline or filled in with washes of colour. This style seems to have become popular about the middle of the fifth century, and was employed for the funeral *lekythi* of which we have already spoken, nearly all of which are of Athenian fabric (Plate XXVIII.). They continued to be made well on into the fourth century, but the later examples are very degenerate and careless.

In other forms, especially the cup and the *kylix* (toilet-box), some exceedingly beautiful specimens have come down to us, which show delicacy of drawing and firmness of touch never surpassed ; and this is the more remarkable, if, as is probable, the lines were drawn with a brush. Bearing in mind that Polygnotos and his contemporaries painted with a limited

number of colours on a white ground, we may fairly see in these also a reflection of the art of the greater painters of the time (Pl. XXVIII.).

Towards the middle of the fifth century the patriotism of the Athenian artist finds expression in the growing importance which he attaches to local legends, especially those of Theseus, the typical Attic hero (Pl. XXVII.). This was largely due to the recovery and solemn interment of the hero's bones in the temple dedicated to him, which took place under Kimon in 469 B.C. It is probable that Theseus was regarded as the typical athlete or Attic *ephebos*, and his contests as analogous to scenes in the gymnasium. Hence the grouping on some vases of scenes from his labours like so many groups of athletes; and hence, too, the general tendency of the red-figured vases, especially the cups, to become a sort of glorification of the Attic *ephebos*, the representations of whom, running, leaping, boxing, enjoying himself at the banquet, or in other forms of revelry, are out of all proportion to other subjects.

We find evidence of this, too, in another form. Many vases, especially the cups of the severe and strong periods, bear names of persons inscribed on the designs with the word *kalos*, "fair" or "noble," attached;

sometimes merely "the boy is fair." The exact meaning of this practice has been much discussed, but evidence seems to show that the persons celebrated must have been quite young at the time, and were therefore youths famous for their beauty or athletic prowess. Some of the names which occur are those of characters celebrated in history, such as Hipparchos, Miltiades, and Alcibiades; and though they cannot always be identified with the historical personages, enough evidence has been obtained in this way to be of great value for the chronology of the vases. Further, the practice of the vase-painters of adopting each his own particular favourite name or set of names has enabled scholars to identify many unsigned vases with particular schools, and thus greatly to increase our knowledge of the characteristics of individual artists.

For all practical purposes the red-figured style at Athens came to an end with the fall of the city in 404 B.C. Not that they then ceased to be made entirely, but that at this time the decadence set in with terrible rapidity, and such as were produced were quite without merit. The whole tendency of the fourth century in Greece was one of decentralisation;

and the art of vase-painting was no exception, for we find that there must have been a general migration of craftsmen from Athens, not only to the Crimea and North Africa, but to Southern Italy, which now becomes the chief centre of vase-production. Here there were many rich and flourishing Greek colonies or Grecised towns ready to welcome the new art as an addition to their many luxuries, such as Tarentum, Paestum, and Capua. We see their tendencies reflected in the showy splendour of their painted vases, in which the only aim was size and gaudy colouring (Plate XXIX.).

The general method of painting remains that of the Athenian red-figure vases, but without any idea of simplicity or refinement, as is seen in the ornamentation, in the choice of colours, and in the drawing of the figures. Large masses of white are invariably employed, especially for the flesh of women or Eros, the universally present God of Love, and for architectural objects. Yellow is introduced for details of features or hair, and for attempts at shading; nor is purple uncommon. The reverse of the vases, when painted, is devoid of all accessory ornamentation, and the figures drawn with the greatest carelessness as if not intended to be seen; usually two or three



FIGURE 10. Dionysus seated on a throne, with a lion's head mask, and a figure in a lion's head mask seated to his left, and another figure seated to his right. The background is dark, and the entire scene is framed by a decorative border with a repeating geometric pattern.



VASE-PAINTINGS FROM SOUTHERN ITALY



young men conversing together. There is throughout a lavish use of ornamental patterns, such as palmettes, wreaths of leaves, or ornaments strewn over the field (a reversion to an old practice).

The drawing, having now become entirely free, errs in the opposite extreme; the forms are soft and the male figures often effeminate. A love of the far-fetched betrays itself in variety of posture and elaborate foreshortening, and the fanciful and richly-embroidered draperies of the figures, as well as the frequent architectural setting, seem to indicate that theatrical representations exercised much influence on the vases. It is also probable that the great painters of the fifth and fourth centuries, such as Zeuxis, provided sources of inspiration for their humbler fellow-craftsmen; but rather perhaps in the subjects chosen than in regard to style, although the effect of many scenes on the larger vases is decidedly pictorial.

The influence of the stage, already hinted at, is in two directions, one the result of tragedy, the other of comedy. The former may be seen in the numerous subjects drawn directly from the plays of Euripides, such as the *Medeia*, the *Hecuba*, and the *Hercules Furens*, as well as in the arrangement of the mythological scenes

on the larger vases and the elaborate costumes of the figures. The influence of comedy is of another kind, the source of these subjects being a kind of farce, often burlesquing myths, which was popular in Southern Italy about the fourth century. Scenes are represented as actually taking place on the stage, and the costumes are closely related to those of the old comedy of Aristophanes; some are parodies of myths, others subjects from daily life, such as a father dragging a drunken youth home from a banquet.

Scenes from daily life form a large proportion of the subjects on these vases, but many of them are of a purely fanciful and meaningless character, the commonest type being that of a young man and a woman exchanging presents of fruit, toilet-boxes, or other objects. They are more akin to the designs on Dresden china or the Watteau figures of the eighteenth century.

Many vases of this period, especially those of large size, were, as already noted, obviously designed expressly for funeral purposes. Some of these bear representations of the Under-world, with numerous groups of figures, such as Pluto and Persephone, Herakles and Cerberus, Orpheus and Eurydice, or Furies

administering punishments. On others we have representations of shrines or tombs, sometimes with effigies of the deceased in them, at which the relatives make offerings and libations, as on the Athenian *lekythi*. The worship of the dead, as here indicated, seems to have been universal among the Greeks.

About the end of the third century the manufacture of painted vases would seem to have been rapidly dying out in Italy, as had long been the case elsewhere, and their place is taken by unpainted vases modelled in the form of animals and human figures, or ornamented with stamped and moulded reliefs, which in their turn give way to the plainer Arretine or so-called Samian wares of the Roman period.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GREEK BRONZE-WORK

Early Greek bronzes—Method of casting—Bronze statuettes and their relation to the great sculptors—Works in relief—Etruscan bronzes.

**A**LTHOUGH to a great extent partaking of the nature, and bound up with the history, of sculpture, Greek bronze-work is sufficiently important to demand a separate chapter to itself. We have already seen that several of the great sculptors worked exclusively or mainly in bronze, and more than one existing work of art in that material might be cited as illustrating their style. But if we were content with what has already been said in that way, we should be ignoring a branch of Greek art which is fully as deserving of attention as any other. The great statues in bronze, with one or two exceptions, have perished, or are only represented by fragments ; but in the realm of decorative art there is no material on

which the Greeks lavished so much skill and attention.

It is difficult for a modern to realise the extensive use of bronze in antiquity, as compared with the present day, even after iron and other materials had come into general use. For instance, the ancients always employed bronze for locks and keys, for knives and other tools, for defensive armour or weapons such as spear-heads and arrow-heads, where we should use iron or steel. The invention of the last-named metal has no doubt largely influenced the modern usage, but this does not altogether explain the preference for bronze. It was also largely used for furniture, such as chairs and couches, and for vessels of all kinds where we should employ wood, glass, clay, and other materials. Bronze, moreover, is a material which easily lends itself to decoration, by means of modelling, chasing, or engraving; and thus gave ample play to the marvellous decorative instincts of the Greeks, who like the medieval artists "touched nothing which they did not adorn." Thus it is that our museums are stocked with countless numbers of objects such as mirrors, vases, lamps, and armour, many of which take high rank as works of art, as well as the enormous collec-

tions of statuettes, which adorned the domestic shrines, or in many cases were attached by way of ornament to articles of furniture. These, though often of great merit, or of interest as copies from masterpieces, are hardly of sufficient importance to call for notice in treating of Greek sculpture.

Greek bronze-work may be considered under two heads, for each of which distinct technical processes were required: (1) Statuary, produced either by solid casting, by riveting together beaten plates, or by the *cire perdue* or hollow-casting process. Of these the two former are practically confined to a very early period, and nearly all Greek bronzes from the sixth century B.C. onwards are hollow-cast. (2) Decorative work, ornamented with chased, engraved, or *repoussé* designs.

All the earliest bronze statuettes, such as those of the Mycenaean period, are cast solid, but it is evident that the waste of valuable material and inconvenient weight of such statues must soon have led to new developments. This process was derived from Egypt, where it was known as early as the fifth and sixth dynasties (3500-3100 B.C.). For smaller objects, in the case of which its disadvantages were less obvious, it was always retained.

The process of riveting beaten plates together, known as *sphyrelaton*, appears to have held the field about the time when sculpture was first obtaining a foothold on Greek soil, as we learn from some of the descriptions of early statues given by Pausanias. The Greek word which he uses in one instance for the process means "to clothe," and seems to imply that it originated in the idea of representing drapery on a wooden statue or *xoanon* by covering it in this fashion. All early metal-work seems to have been produced in this manner—even spear-heads are made of flat plates beaten into a cylindrical form, and bronze plating was largely used for decoration of all kinds. Ornamentation and figures in relief were produced by beating up from behind with a blunt instrument, the details being engraved with a sharp point in front.

Of this kind of work the best examples we possess are a series of very early reliefs found at Olympia, on the Acropolis of Athens, and elsewhere, which may be regarded as the first specimens of true Hellenic art in bronze. The date of these reliefs is the seventh century B.C., but the school of art which they represent is uncertain, some authorities contending for Corinth or Argos, others for Chalcis in Euboea.

It is at all events certain that Chalcis was the only town in Greece possessing copper mines of any importance, and that it was a great commercial centre in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. But so far no finds of early remains are known from its site, as is the case with Corinth.

The attribution of the invention of hollow-casting in bronze to Rhoecos and Theodoros of Samos about the end of the seventh century B.C. (p. 30) may not be without a germ of truth. They probably learned their art in Egypt and introduced it into the Peloponnese, where they founded schools. Pausanias mentions a statue of Night at Ephesus by Rhoecos, as the oldest hollow-cast statue. We have also seen that they were probably the first to utilise clay figures as models for bronze statues. This method of casting statues hollow from a clay model is known nowadays as the *cire perdue* process.

The *cire perdue* method universally employed for Greek sculpture in bronze from this time onwards was in the main, as far as is known, identical with that in use at the present day. A very vivid and instructive account of this method of casting statues is given by Benvenuto Cellini in his autobiography, in describing the making of his Perseus. The name refers to

the manner in which the wax model was disposed of and replaced by the bronze, as an epigram in the Greek Anthology puts it: "Icarus, wax wrought thy destruction; but now it is by means of wax that the craftsman has restored to thee thy form." The essential features of the process are the clay or plaster model roughly reproducing the whole conception with which the sculptor begins to work, and the thin coating of wax laid over this, in which all the details are brought out with perfect accuracy. Over this the outer mould, composed of several layers of a specially mixed clay, was applied, and the wax being melted in a furnace ran out through holes, and molten bronze was introduced in its place. Finally the surface of the bronze was prepared by touching up and by further adornments such as colouring, lacquering, or gilding.

A vase-painting in the Berlin Museum of about 500 B.C., representing a bronze foundry with statues in process of completion, is really more instructive on this head than any amount of description can be. Among other points it shows that the casting was done in several pieces, the parts being afterwards welded together; the head of a statue, out of which the core is being raked, lies on the ground

before it, while a foot and a hand and some heads are suspended from the wall of the foundry. Another statue is already completed, and two men are engaged in giving the finishing touches to the surface.

The existing Greek bronze statuettes of the archaic period are mostly of small size, and reproduce the types familiar from the larger works of the period, the standing nude male or draped female figure, sometimes characterised as a deity by a flower or other attribute. One of the most interesting is a copy of the Apollo of Miletus by Canachos, representing the deity with a deer in his hand, as in the original temple-statue. It probably dates from the fifth century, and the style may be fairly said to bear out the criticism of Cicero that his statues "were too stiff to be veracious." Few Greek bronzes are more full of charm and grace than the exquisite little figure, also in the British Museum, with eyes formed by diamonds and drapery adorned with inlaid borders of silver (Pl. XXX.). Of life-size works of the fifth century (it is not possible to name any of earlier date) almost the only existing example is a figure of a charioteer from Delphi, which is probably to be associated with the sculptor Calamis.



**ARCHAIC GREEK BRONZE STATUETTES**



Turning now to the fully-developed style of the fifth century, we find comparatively few representatives of this phase of art in bronze. On the other hand, many statuettes of later date recall with more or less exactness some of the famous works of that age. The British Museum possesses a spirited figure of a bearded Satyr, which from its attitude may be undoubtedly recognised as a copy of the famous Marsyas by Myron (p. 52), and bears a close resemblance to the statue in the Vatican. It is true that it recalls Myron rather in its conception than in its style, the head for instance and the treatment of the hair being much more in the manner of the Pergamene school, and the figure can hardly be dated earlier than about 300 B.C.

The art of Pheidias is reflected in some small statuettes of Athena; but as is natural on so small a scale, details are largely disregarded, and a mere suggestion of the original is all that they can lay claim to. The Polycleitan athlete, on the other hand, has found many imitators in this humbler form, both Greek and Etruscan; and this is hardly surprising with a sculptor who worked mainly in bronze.

When we reach the fourth century the reproductions of famous sculptures become even

more numerous, and this period seems to have been the golden age of the art in Greece, not only as regards the statuettes, but for other objects, such as the mirror-cases, of which we must presently speak. In the British Museum there are two famous heads which rank second to none among works of art in this material, and reflect in their artistic qualities the spirit of the two great masters of this period, Scopas and Praxiteles. In the Castellani head, usually called Aphrodite, we see the typical individualities of Scopas, the low, broad forehead, the intensely gazing deep-set eyes, and the large, heavy nose strongly marked. In the other head, representing the winged god of Sleep (Hypnos), Praxitelean qualities are equally apparent. The treatment of the hair, the soft beauty of the head, and the whole artistic conception tend to justify this attribution even if the work is not directly from his hand (Pl. XXXI.).

Another great worker in bronze was Lysippos, and there are many existing bronzes which belong to his school, such as the exquisite heroic figure from the Lake of Bracciano in the British Museum, in some respects perhaps the finest of all existing Greek bronzes (Pl. XXXII.). It represents a youthful hero seated on a rock looking downwards, and is cast solid with a



**BRONZE HEAD OF HYPNOS (SLEEP)**



flat back, so that it is partly in high relief. It has been attached at the back to a piece of furniture. The famous bronzes of Siris, found near that river in Southern Italy in 1820, are close rivals of the Bracciano figure, and equally reminiscent of the style of Lysippos, especially in their minuteness of finish (Plate XXXII.). They form the shoulder-pieces of a cuirass, and from a technical point of view are a truly marvellous production. The subject of the two reliefs is that of a Greek hero overthrowing an Amazon, and the figures, although only beaten out from behind in *repoussé* work, are hammered out to such a degree of fineness that they are almost in the round and the bronze has been reduced to little more than the thickness of paper. Add to this the extraordinary care and delicacy with which every detail has been worked up on the surface, such as the folds of drapery, the hair, and the patterns on the shields, and the whole presents a *tour de force* which none but a great master could have executed.

Yet again we find the Lysippian influence strongly marked in a group of bronzes found at Paramythia in Epirus, near the seat of the ancient oracle of Zeus at Dodona. They were discovered in 1795-96, and the greater number were obtained by the great collector Payne

Knight, from whom they came to the British Museum. They represent various gods such as Zeus, Poseidon, and Apollo, the two first-named being perhaps the finest specimens. Their date is about the third century B.C. In the Poseidon we observe the short torso and long legs which characterise the Lysippian system of proportions, and we may therefore regard it as a reproduction of the ideal type of that god which Lysippos created. Another fine figure, minutely finished, and with a keen expression of face, is the Zeus, also a favourite subject with Lysippos.

We have already remarked on the tendency of the Greeks to lavish decoration on ordinary articles of household use, a tendency which is nowhere better exemplified than in their mirrors and mirror-cases; which were invariably of bronze. The archaic form of mirror, both in Greece and Etruria, was that of a circular polished disc with a handle often sculptured in the form of Aphrodite or some other figure; the Etruscans devoted their attention chiefly to adorning the back of this disc with an engraved design, often of great merit, but the Greeks for some reason did not favour this method of decoration. These archaic mirrors, of which large numbers were found on the Athenian



GREEK BRONZE RELIEFS



Acropolis and elsewhere in Greece, were supplanted about the end of the fifth century B.C. by plain circular discs without handles, enclosed in flat boxes or cases, the lids acting with a hinge. Sometimes the lower part of this case served as the mirror, but in most cases the outside of the cover was adorned with a relief, known as *emblema*, attached separately. Many of these designs, which extend from about 400 to 200 B.C., are exceedingly beautiful, the *repoussé* work in some cases being almost as elaborate as that of the Siris bronzes. The subjects are very varied: Aphrodite and Eros, Dionysos and Maenads, Nike (Victory) sacrificing a bull, scenes between lovers, or ideal heads all finding a place, as well as scenes from heroic legend. One of the finest represents personifications of the city of Corinth and the island of Leucas; another (in the British Museum), Danae receiving the shower of gold in her lap. The last-named is further remarkable in that it is accompanied by an incised design in the Etruscan fashion on the back of the mirror; the subject is Aphrodite playing at the game of "five-stones" with Pan. The style of the reliefs varies very greatly from the most exquisite refinement to a degraded coarseness.

An account of Greek bronzes would not be complete without some mention of the achievements of Etruscan artists in this direction. The Etruscans were such excellent workers in bronze, and their work bears such a close relation to that of the Greeks, that it is more fitly considered here than in connection with Roman Art. Pliny says that Etruscan statues were dispersed all over the world, and there are passages in the Greek poets which seem to imply that their domestic utensils such as vases and lamps were held in high repute in antiquity. But to what extent they displayed original genius in the work, or were susceptible to Hellenic influences, it is somewhat difficult to determine; this literary evidence is hardly borne out by modern researches, for the instances of exported Etruscan objects are extremely rare. On the other hand, there are many bronzes of which it is hard to say to which race they owe their origin. It may, however, fairly be laid down that in such objects as ornamental vases, tripods, and candelabra they rivalled the Greeks, and that their engraved mirrors and cistae or toilet-boxes have a special excellence of their own; but that their statuettes do not, with a few exceptions, display much individuality of style

or originality of conception. Where this is to be found it is often marred by provincial mannerisms, and the majority are either direct copies of Greek work or else mere shop-ware to be purchased at a humble price for votive offerings or household ornaments.

The earliest genuinely Etruscan bronze-work is to be seen in the contents of the Polledrara tomb at Vulci, now in the British Museum. Among these objects, which date from about 600 B.C. and show many traces of Oriental influence, is a remarkable bronze bust of a woman, with a band of reliefs round the base. The upper part is obviously of local make, but the reliefs are Greek in style and feeling, and may perhaps have been imported and used up by the native artist; they have much in common with early Corinthian and Ionic art. The rudeness and rigidity of the bust and its elementary technique contrast strongly with the fine execution of the reliefs, and remind us of a tendency of Etruscan sculptors to fail in the round even where their relief-work is good, as was the case also with the Assyrians. The same contrast may be observed in the archaic terra-cotta sarcophagus from Cervetri in the British Museum.

Passing on to a later stage in the develop-

ment of Etruscan art we reach, with the beginning of the fifth century, the earliest examples of the ornamented vases and mirrors in which they delighted. Their energy in the archaic period was chiefly directed to the production of tall candelabra or lamp-stands, surmounted by little figures of warriors, Satyrs, etc., or of vases of various kinds, such as caldrons, buckets, or open bowls with ornamental handles like those of the early Greek mirrors; other kinds of vases are decorated with detached figures of horsemen or handles in the form of Gorgon-heads or other products of their varied fancy. In the fifth century B.C. the mirror with incised designs (Pl. XXXIII.) first sprang into popularity, and remained firmly established for some two or three centuries.

The prototypes of the designs on Etruscan mirrors are to be sought, not so much in Greek bronze-work, which, as we have seen, did not favour this method, but in the red-figured vases which were imported into Etruria in such large numbers during the fifth century. The Etruscan artist apparently shrank from the task so successfully achieved by the Greek painter, of decorating the curved surface of a vase, to which his power of drawing might have proved equal, and instead devoted himself



**ETRUSCAN ENGRAVED MIRROR**



to adorning the flat, even surface of a mirror. In the subjects depicted on the Greek vases he had an extensive mythological repertoire ready to hand, while the interior designs of the beautiful red-figured cups (see p. 159) served him as an obvious model for disposing designs in a circular space. In some cases the parallelism of style is quite curiously marked. To the Etruscan, then, the mirror was what the cup was to the Greek artist, an object that afforded him an opportunity of showing unlimited skill in drawing and genius of conception.

The majority of the mirrors belong to the fourth and third centuries B.C., and the line of distinction is clearly marked between the fine and the late or decadent period. In the former the conceptions are carefully thought out and thoroughly Hellenic in spirit, while the drawing is refined and masterly. In the latter, as in the vases of Southern Italy, the drawing is free and careless, the subjects mainly monotonous repetitions of certain types. One of the finest in the British Museum represents the meeting of Menelaos and Helen after the taking of Troy; and this is only rivalled by one at Berlin with Dionysos embracing Semele, and another at Paris representing the apôtheosis of Herakles. The subjects are almost entirely

drawn from Greek mythology, the Trojan legends being especially popular, and, generally speaking, they correspond in popularity with those found on the painted vases. Occasionally, however, subjects from local or even Roman legend are found.

Another detail which was doubtless copied from the vases was the practice of inscribing the names of the figures. Curiously enough, the Etruscans, while adopting Greek myths and legends wholesale, invariably transformed the names of the deities and persons represented into their own language and alphabet. Thus Athena appears as *Menerfa*, Aphrodite as *Turan*, Achilles as *Achle*, and Bellerophon as *Melerpanta*.

Of no less artistic merit and interest than the mirrors are the cistae or large cylindrical toilet-boxes, which for the most part belong to the third century B.C. They have been found almost exclusively at Palestrina in Latium, and although over a thousand mirrors are in existence, the number of the cistae barely amounts to eighty, and only a small proportion bear decoration of any consequence. At their head stands the famous Ficoroni cista, bearing on its lid an early Latin inscription of about 200 B.C., but the work is almost Hellenic in

style. They are usually decorated on the top and round the sides with engraved designs, the subjects being largely drawn from Trojan legend. The scenes on the Ficoroni cista are from the story of the Argonauts, and there is an inferior but still fine example in the British Museum, representing the sacrifice of Trojan captives on the funeral pyre of Patroclos.

Three distinct processes seem to have gone to the production of a cista. First the bronze plates were cut into squares and received the engraved decoration; they were then clipped and bent into cylindrical form, the edges soldered, and the cover and bottom attached; finally the handles and feet were added, these being usually of ornamental character.

The subject of Gaulish and Graeco-Roman bronzes will be more appropriately dealt with in the volume of this series on Roman art.

## CHAPTER IX

### GREEK TERRA-COTTAS

Use of clay for sculpture—Archaic types of statuettes  
—Manufacture—Purposes for which made—Tanagra  
figures—Later Greek fabrics.

**T**HE use of clay among the Greeks was very widely prevalent, almost more so than their use of bronze, if we take into consideration the enormous quantities of objects made in this material, from the magnificently-decorated funeral vases down to the humble jar of earthenware, which fall under the separate heading of Pottery.

In the present chapter space compels us to deal only with one branch of the subject, that of artistic work in terra-cotta or baked clay for purely ornamental purposes, embracing the whole series of terra-cotta statuettes which form such a charming adjunct to museums of antiquities.

It is characteristic of the Hellenic race that from its earliest beginnings it did not employ

clay for utilitarian purposes exclusively, but soon learned the value of this easily-worked material for producing images not only of its deities, but of animals and human beings. The history of the Greek word for sculpture is indicative of the antiquity of this usage; from a verb which means literally "to mould or knead," *e.g.* in wet clay, and hence to model in any material, was derived the recognised classical word *plastike*, the "plastic" art. Both Greek and Latin writers bear witness to the primitive use of clay for sculptured images; but it also had a formidable rival in wood, as is shown by the parallel development of the word *xoanon* (see above, p. 26).

The earliest sculptured work in clay of which there is any literary record was a group of figures of sun-dried clay, representing Dionysos feasting in the house of Amphiktion, which Pausanias saw in the Potters' quarter at Athens. Elsewhere he speaks of similar figures surmounting the Stoa Basilike, but of baked clay, and therefore of later date; these represented Dawn carrying off the "Attic Boy" Kephalos, and Theseus throwing Skiron into the sea, and may be paralleled from existing archaic terracotta reliefs.

But modern researches enable us to trace statuettes of terra-cotta back to a far remoter origin. In Cyprus and elsewhere rude idols of this material reach back to the Mycenaean period, and among them are figures of goddesses clasping infants to their breasts which seem to be the product of some primitive form of nature-worship, even as later Earth (Gaia) was worshipped as the Nursing-mother. This idea is probably of Oriental origin, and similar rude figures have been found in Chaldaea and Phoenicia. The next stage, corresponding to the Geometrical period in Greek pottery, is marked by the appearance of a series of columnar or board-like figures in which the limbs are hardly—often not at all—distinguished, and the features sketchily modelled, or only roughly indicated in black paint. These are chiefly found in Cyprus, where the columnar type prevails, in Rhodes where both types are found, and in Boeotia, where the board-type was most popular. They date from about the seventh century B.C.

These are followed in the sixth and fifth centuries by statuettes of more developed archaic style, with modelled limbs and drapery, in which two types prevail almost to the exclusion of all others. These are *the standing*



ARCHAIC GREEK TERRACOTTAS



*and seated female figures* (Pl. XXXIV.) which, as we have already seen in Chapter II., played such a prominent part in the development of early Greek sculpture. They are mainly, as far as can be judged, of mythological import, representing especially the under-world deities, Demeter and Persephone; but the same types seem to have been used indiscriminately for votive offerings in temples and for funeral purposes. In the latter case they were originally, like the Egyptian *ushabti*, regarded as habitations for the souls or ghosts of the departed, as well as representations of the protecting deities of the nether world. The primitive Greek mind has been frequently observed to confuse the deity with his worshipper, and in many cases this confusion manifests itself in its art by the employment of the same type for both conceptions.

Another favourite product of the archaic period was the so-called funeral mask or bust, of which large numbers, chiefly feminine, have been found in the tombs. Here again Egyptian influences are to be detected, the idea having evidently taken its rise from the coffins which we see modelled in the upper part in the form of the deceased person. The Greeks converted these into female busts, retaining the hollowed-

out back, and by the addition of a veil and the typical high head-dress of the under-world deities evolved presentments of their favourite Demeter and Persephone. We read of such a mask in the pages of Pausanias, who tells us that at Pheneus in Arcadia a religious ceremony took place in which a priest wore a mask representing Demeter.

Next there is the class of archaic terra-cottas which are obviously only children's playthings and nothing more, and were buried in the tombs of children as if for their use in a future existence. They comprise dolls with jointed limbs, figures of horsemen and animals and other objects, such as boats or fruit (Pl. XXXV.). There is a pretty epigram in the Greek Anthology which tells us how Timareta when about to marry dedicated to Artemis the playthings of her childhood—her beloved ball, her hair-net, and above all her dolls and their clothes. The Greek word here used for doll is *kora*, "girl" or "maiden," a word which was in general use for terra-cotta figures of girls at the period when the Tanagra statuettes were in fashion.

The processes employed in the manufacture of terra-cottas by the Greeks were five in number, though it does not follow that all



**TERRACOTTA TOYS AND DOLLS**



five were necessarily employed in the production of any one object. They were as follows : (1) the preparation of the clay ; (2) moulding or modelling ; (3) retouching and adding details ; (4) baking ; (5) colouring and gilding.

There appears to have been considerable variety among the clays in use in different parts of the Greek world, and some, such as that of Cape Kolias in Attica, always enjoyed special renown. Some potters preferred red clay, others white ; others again a mixture of the two ; but for the painted pottery a red clay was usually employed. In the terra-cottas of Athens five varieties of clay have been noticed, in those of Myrina, in Asia Minor, no less than nine ; but these may be partly due to circumstances of firing rather than intrinsic differences.

The earliest terra-cottas and the smaller objects, such as the toys, were produced by modelling the figure in a solid mass ; but subsequently the use of a mould became almost invariable. The invention of modelling in clay, or rather of modelling reliefs as opposed to figures in the round, was traditionally ascribed to Butades of Sikyon (see p. 30), who, according to the story (which varies somewhat in detail), drew the portrait of his daughter's lover in outline on the wall and filled it in with

clay. Probably he hollowed out the lines of the face after drawing them and impressed wet clay into the hollows, by means of which he obtained the result in relief. But the whole story must be received with caution.

The chief advantages of the use of a mould were the scope it gave for reducing the "walls" of the figure to the smallest possible thickness, thereby avoiding the danger of shrinkage in the baking, and the consequent extreme lightness obtained, as well as greater accuracy in detail. The mould itself was of terra-cotta baked very hard; many examples of these moulds are preserved in our museums as well as moulds for terra-cotta vases with reliefs, or for lamps. The heads and arms were usually modelled separately and attached afterwards, the average number of moulds required for one figure being about four, but some of the more elaborate had even more.

The first step was to smear the inner surface of the mould with moist clay, covering every part; other layers were then added to the requisite thickness. The back was made separately, either in a mould or by hand, and fitted on; it was in most cases left unmodelled, or with only slight indications of form, and almost always had a circular or rectangular

hole left in it to allow of the evaporation of moisture. Although a whole series of figures was frequently cast in one mould, there were many devices for redeeming such series from the charge of monotony, by varying the pose of the head or attaching the arms in different ways, or again by different attributes and varieties of colouring and small details. This was all achieved in the process of retouching, the chief object of which was to bring out details by working them up with a tool.

Herein lies the reason why the Tanagra statuettes, through which runs such a strong family likeness, yet prove so marvellously varied on a close inspection; as a French writer has well said, "All the Tanagra figures are sisters, but few of them are twins." In this connection it is instructive to observe two statuettes of Eros burning a butterfly with his torch, which are in the British Museum collection; both are from the same mould, and in appearance they are identical, except for the colouring that remains on one of the pair; but one stands far above the other in artistic charm because it is more finished in detail.

In baking the terra-cottas the great danger was an ill-regulated or excessive temperature, which for this purpose was much lower than

required for the highly-glazed vases ; it was also necessary to see that all moisture evaporated, yet not too rapidly. Plutarch tells a story of a terrible disaster that befell the terra-cotta chariot cast for the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol at Rome, showing how by some accident the clay swelled up to such an extent that it was necessary to destroy the kiln to extract the work.

As a general rule all statuettes were coloured, though the present appearance of many may not suggest it ; the exceptions are chiefly among the earliest and latest examples. The medium by means of which the colours were laid on was a white "slip" of a creamy colour and consistency with which the whole figure (except the back) was coated ; this when dry became very flaky, and thus tended to drop off, carrying the colours with it. This white slip was retained for the nude parts and often for the drapery, but the latter was frequently striped with red or blue, or wholly in one of these colours. For features and other details such as the hair, black and red were employed or a deep yellow. Gilding was more rarely used, except for small objects, imitation jewellery being sometimes made in later times in gilded terra-cotta. At Athens and Tanagra, and

more frequently in the Sicilian terra-cottas of the Hellenistic period, an enamelled glaze is sometimes found, usually of a grey colour, but sometimes of pink or orange to suggest flesh-tints.

The question of the uses to which the terra-cotta statuettes were put is a very difficult one, owing to the varying circumstances under which those of similar type have been found, and also to the difficulty in many cases of determining whether they have a mythological significance. They are found chiefly in tombs, but large numbers come from the sites of temples and sanctuaries, and they have even been found in private houses. It is clear, therefore, that they were used for religious purposes and funeral ceremonies and in daily life, and that even if their primary signification was religious, that cannot have been their exclusive end.

Literary evidence tells us but little, though Plato alludes to the practice of hanging up small figures (*korae*) in shrines, and Demosthenes condemns the Athenians for electing "figure-head" generals "like makers of clay figures for the market." Later writers speak of "those who buy *korae* for their children,"

or of making little images of animals in clay in order to trick children ; and thus we see that a fourth use of terra-cotta figures was that to which allusion has already been made, as children's toys.

As regards their use in the house, whether for ornament or otherwise, we have as yet little evidence one way or the other ; but it may be possible that many of those found in the tombs had previously served some such purpose. For us moderns, accustomed to adorn our houses with pretty things, it is difficult to believe that the charming Tanagra statuettes, devoid as they apparently are of all special significance, were either made for religious or funeral purposes ; yet their presence in such numbers in the tombs calls for some explanation. Originally, no doubt, the terra-cottas placed in the tombs were images of the deities placed round the dead to protect him, as we have already seen in speaking of the archaic types,

In time, however, though the customs lingered on, the symbolism became obscured and the religious meaning a mere convention ; while the growth of artistic taste side by side with a rationalising tendency in religious ideas transformed the votive figures into mere objects of art. Thus the archaic types were trans-

formed into mere *genre* creations, a group of the Earth as nursing-mother being converted into one of an ordinary mother with her baby; the standing goddess with a bird or flower as her attribute into a girl with a flower or playing with a dove, who is so common a type among the Tanagra figures.

To sum up the question as briefly as possible it may be laid down, as a fair statement of the case, that terra-cotta figures fall under two heads: those in which the meaning is conditioned by the circumstances under which they were found, and those whose meaning is purely accidental. The first class will include those of the archaic period, and others, the object of which is clearly votive, whether the meaning is mythological or not; the second, the bulk of the later terra-cottas, such as those of Tanagra, which are chiefly found in tombs, but may be found under other circumstances. In the former case, the strict adherence to one type, as in the archaic seated goddesses, implies their religious associations; in the latter, the illimitable variety of subject, pose, and conception seems to indicate that no special meaning was intended to be conveyed, but that they were regarded as objects of beauty for the living and, if the purchaser so chose, appro-

prate offerings to the immortals or to the dead.

It has often been remarked that Greek terra-cottas do not exhibit, like the other branches of ancient art, a continuous and gradual development from archaism to perfection, followed by a similar decadence; but that there is an abrupt break in the fifth century, during which this art is almost unrepresented. This is not to say that there is no "finest period" for Greek terra-cottas, as the products of the Tanagra tombs show; but only that this period of perfection is (apparently at any rate) widely separated from the archaic period, the Tanagra figures being usually dated between the middle of the fourth and the middle of the third century. If evidence is sought on this point, it is yielded by the results of the excavations at Tanagra, which showed that in the tombs of the sixth century containing archaic painted vases, archaic statuettes were not uncommon; in those of the fifth *only* painted vases were found; while the tombs which contained such thousands of terra-cotta figures only yielded plain black glazed pottery of a kind that did not come into use before the fourth century.

This seems to point to the probability that

there was a fashion in tomb-furniture, at least at Tanagra ; and that for a time here, as also at Athens, painted vases had the preference, but that when that art died out, the terra-cottas resumed their sway with the happiest results. But in regard to many sites, such as Rhodes, it is probable that another influence was at work, and this was the hieratic tendency which often manifests itself so strongly in Greek art. That is to say, that the terra-cottas which are archaic in style are not so in point of date, but that the old style was deliberately adhered to, as at Athens in the case of the prize amphorae, purely on religious grounds. The evidence of Rhodian tombs certainly points in this direction, for there terra-cottas of archaic type were often found with red-figured vases of a much more advanced technique and style. It is also obvious that this principle was likely to be still stronger in the case of votive offerings in temples.

Terra-cotta figures of what we may call fifth-century style are, then, exceedingly rare ; those that we possess are chiefly from Athens, or from isolated finds in Greece, and there is also a series of votive terra-cottas found at Larnaka in Cyprus, of which some fine specimens are in the British Museum. A French

writer of authority considers that these are the best examples we possess of the "grand Attic style" of the fifth century, and he explains this sudden and unexpected achievement by supposing that the moulds for the figures were imported direct from Athens.

To know, therefore, what were the characteristics of the best Greek work in terra-cotta we must turn our attention to the succeeding period, and to its most typical products, the Tanagra statuettes (Pl. XXXVI.). And therein we are at once confronted with a startling change. The seated and standing feminine types are, it is true, still in a majority, but it is their meaning that has changed. In a word, they are no longer mythological, but *genre* figures; no longer suggestive of religious beliefs, but only of secular daily life. The revolution, however, or rather the evolution, is due more to artistic development than to the alterations in religious ideas. Art-types became secularised, and the originally religious conceptions were adopted almost unconsciously for subjects drawn from daily life, or even without any special significance.

Hence we find an almost unlimited variety of the feminine standing types, including women or girls in every conceivable pose or



**TANAGRA STATUETTES**



attitude. In most cases the arms are more or less concealed by the mantle which is drawn closely across the figure, even covering the hands; but many hold a fan, mirror, wreath, or theatrical mask in one hand, while with the other they gather together the folds of their draperies. Some again lean on a column; others play with a bird. The long tunic or chiton and the mantle or himation which all without exception wear formed the typical dress of the Greek matron and girl; and to this was added for outdoor wear a large shady hat. This in the fifth century was only worn by women when travelling, but later became part of their everyday costume. It is one of the details which marks the date of these figures, and another is the fan, a luxury introduced from the East in the fourth century.

The seated types follow much on the same lines, but are more rare; the chair or throne of the archaic period is replaced by a rocky base, which at once added picturesqueness to the composition and an appearance of stability and freedom to the figure.

Altogether homogeneous in style and character, it is uncertain whether these Tanagra figures belong to a short and clearly-defined period or to a longer period of little change

and development. But many details tend to show that they must be placed in the earlier part of the Hellenistic age, between 350 and 200 B.C., which is that covered by the age of Alexander the Great and his successors. The conceptions certainly reflect the characteristics of this age rather than the Praxitelean and other schools of sculpture in the fourth century, as may be seen, for instance, in the treatment of the god Eros. The vital difference between the Tanagra figures and Greek sculpture of the best period is that the former aim chiefly at grace of movement, and exhibit a tendency to taper upwards from an enlarged base, the effect of which, though full of grace and elegance, lacks the beauties of the better-proportioned statues.

It is, however, more likely that the true source of their inspiration is to be sought in painting. There was an important school of this art in Boeotia in the fourth century, which largely devoted itself to the production of similar subjects; and we may conversely observe the influence of the terra-cottas in the paintings of Pompeii which reflect a later style of pictorial art. In the terra-cottas of Myrina in Asia Minor, which in artistic merit stand next to those of Tanagra, Hellenistic

characteristics are even more strongly marked, and the figures are altogether freer from ancient traditions ; they are certainly later as a whole, but hardly earlier than the second century B.C.

At Myrina we find a much greater variety of subjects than at Tanagra, especially figures of Aphrodite and Eros, Dionysos, Victory, and other divinities ; there is also a great preponderance of comic and grotesque subjects ; yet withal much direct borrowing from Tanagra. The Tanagra types are in fact found repeated, with varying success from an artistic point of view, all over the ancient world : in Asia Minor, in Cyprus, North Africa, and Southern Italy, a large proportion of the terra-cotta figures found on each site are mere repetitions of the favourite poses and motives (Plate XXXVII.).

The popularity of this branch of art at all periods is amply demonstrated by the wide distribution not only of Tanagra but of archaic and other types ; the favourite archaic motive of the seated goddess is found repeated with absolute exactness in places so far apart as Syria, Cyrene, Rhodes, and Sardinia, and the same applies to some of the grotesque types. Among the later terra-cottas the most universal, next to the peculiarly Tanagran favourites, are

Eros and his feminine counterpart, the goddess Victory. The former is almost the one deity who universally caught the popular taste in the Hellenistic age, and is represented standing, flying, or riding on animals of all kinds. At Eretria in Euboea, whence come some of the best examples, we even meet with the counterparts of the playful little Amoretti of the Pompeian wall-paintings.

Generally speaking, in all fabrics of the Hellenistic period the subjects are of the same character, but local influences often produce interesting developments, as in Cyprus, where there was a strong tendency to adhere to the ancient religious types, or in Sicily, where taste ran in the direction of winged or half-draped figures, covered with a bright-coloured enamel glaze. Or again at Naukratis, in the Egyptian Delta, where the influence of Egyptian mythology in its later developments is very strongly marked. These terra-cottas belong chiefly to the Ptolemaic period (about 200-50 B.C.), and illustrate the growing influence of such cults as that of Isis and Harpocrates, deities who were subsequently much popularised by the Romans, or the uncouth god Bes. The terra-cottas of Tarentum are the most characteristic of those from Italian sites; they were chiefly



LATE GREEK TERRACOTTAS



found on the sites of shrines of Dionysos and Persephone, the typical under-world deities, who were much worshipped there. The favourite subject is that of the "funeral banquet," representing the heroised dead, or even the god Dionysos himself, reclining at a couch cup in hand and accompanied by a veiled woman (who is also sometimes transformed into Persephone).

## CHAPTER X

### GREEK GEMS AND COINS

Cylinders and scarabs—Early gem-engraving—Gems of the best period—Technical methods—Coins in relation to Greek art—Method of striking—Types—Classification.

#### I. GEMS AND GEM-ENGRAVING

THE history of precious stones as used by mankind goes back to a very remote antiquity, especially in the records of Oriental nations such as the Hebrews. From earliest times their use was twofold, either as personal or official ornament, or for employment as signets engraved with a name or device for the sealing of documents. And further, the signet-ring in which the stone was fixed became at a very early period a symbol of power and authority.

Among Oriental nations the signet took various forms, of which the Egyptian scarab and the Babylonian cylinder are most familiar; the former was set in a ring of gold, and

Egyptian rings wholly of gold, with engraved hieroglyphics on the bezel, are not uncommon, but the Assyrian people do not seem to have made much use of the finger-ring. The scarab, it is perhaps hardly necessary to say, is so called from its being carved at the back in the form of the sacred scarabæus beetle, the symbol of the Sun-god Rā, the Fertiliser. The hieroglyphic design, which forms the signature of the Egyptian king, is cut on the flat under-side. It is supposed that the scarab came into general use in Egypt about the Eleventh Dynasty, or about 2500 B.C. In later times this became a favourite form for gems with the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Etruscans; the Greeks, however, did not greatly favour the scarab shape, and the plain oval gems which roughly imitate it are known as scaraboids. Strictly speaking, these scarabs hardly come under the heading of precious stones, inasmuch as they are often made of glazed clay or soft steatite. Although they usually serve as an admirable guide to dating other objects, and form our most important source of evidence for the chronology of early Greek remains, some caution has to be exercised in this respect, as there was often a tendency to produce imitations of them in

later times. Thus in the seventh- and sixth-century tombs of Amathus in Cyprus it is not uncommon to find scarabs with the cartouche of Thothmes III., who ruled over Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty, about 1560 B.C.

The cylinders of Babylonia and Assyria were usually cut out of hard stones, such as chalcodony, rock-crystal, hæmatite, or carnelian. They are drilled with holes longitudinally to receive a cord for suspending them round the neck or wrist, and are engraved with names in cuneiform characters and various designs, such as a king slaying a lion, or two animals guarding the sacred tree. Their interest to the student of Greek art lies in the fact that they are not infrequently found in tombs of the Mycenaean age, especially in Cyprus, for which country a special class, in hæmatite, seems to have been manufactured; many, however, are of a debased character, and seem to be the work of the Phoenicians. They were used for sealing the cuneiform documents of the period by rolling them over the soft clay.

The earliest specimens of seals known on Greek soil are those which have recently become famous through Mr. Arthur Evans' discoveries in Crete (see above, p. 8), which are of varied material, and engraved either with

linear signs or "pictographic" designs of all kinds. Mr. Evans' researches in the palace of Minos at Knossos have yielded most interesting examples of their different uses at that time, for sealing documents in the Cretan script or jars full of various commodities.

At Mycenae massive gold signet-rings were found with broad bezels engraved with various subjects, of which the best known represents three ladies in a very un-Greek costume, with skirts which are not only elaborately flounced, but to all appearances divided! This remarkably up-to-date fashion, however, causes the less surprise after the discovery of the Cretan frescoes of the same age with their extremely modern fashion-plate portrayal of the ladies of the period.

The typical gem of the Mycenaean period is, however, the so-called "Island-stone," a circular or lenticular stone, usually of steatite, but also found in rock-crystal, carnelian, and chalcedony. They are chiefly found in the Greek islands, but also in most parts of the Mediterranean where Mycenaean remains are known. The devices cut on these stones consist chiefly of animals; the lion, deer, bull, or goat, either single, or arranged in quasi-heraldic fashion face to face or back to back.

Artistically they are often of high merit, and in the best examples the designer has attained to a naturalism which is only excelled by the designs on the Vaphio cups (see p. 12); but the elaborate pains he often takes so to dispose the figures as to occupy the whole area of the surface of the gem arouses our wonder rather than our admiration. This *horror vacui*, or dread of leaving a vacant space, was characteristic of Greek artists at all periods; but it was left for the vase-painters and coin-engravers of the fifth century to achieve perfection in this respect.

The island-gems survived the Mycenaean age and seem to have lasted down to the seventh century B.C. in Greece, the later examples including a very interesting specimen in the British Museum with a mythological subject: the contest of Herakles with a sea-deity known as "The Old Man of the Sea." But about the end of the seventh century a fresh start seems to have been made, owing partly to the fact that the general introduction of coinage and of writing affected the fashion of gem-engraving. At all events they were no longer needed to the same extent as seals, and from henceforth are mainly restricted to personal ornaments. The wearing of rings,

especially by the luxurious inhabitants of Eastern Asia Minor, is illustrated by the stories which Herodotus tells of the rings of Gyges and Polycrates; the latter was traditionally said to be the work of the early artist Theodoros of Samos (see p. 31), and to have been an emerald set in gold. We are also told that Theodoros made a statue of himself holding a chariot and driver so minute that they were covered with the wings of a fly; this story may perhaps be explained by supposing that he held a beetle-shaped scarab with that subject engraved on the underside.

The scarab was largely popularised by the Phoenicians, who attempted to copy Egyptian hieroglyphics, but usually in a blundering fashion, and sometimes like the Greeks dropped the scarab form, and contented themselves with the scaraboid. Others, however, are engraved with subjects of considerable beauty and delicacy of execution, the style being, as is usual with all their products, a combination of Egyptian and Assyrian, as are also the subjects depicted. Deities and symbols are seen combined without any special meaning, merely in order to form a graceful composition. Some of the best examples of Phoenician gems are to be found among the series in the British

Museum from Tharros in Sardinia, dating from about 550 B.C. onwards. Many of these were found in their original mounts, consisting of plain gold swivel-rings on which the scarab could turn.

Throughout the archaic period, and down to the end of the fifth century, the Greeks adhered in the main to the scarab or scaraboid form for their gems, though this form never attained to the height of popularity which it reached in Etruria. The subjects engraved on these archaic Greek gems range over a wide field, from animals and *genre* subjects to heroic legends and figures of deities. One of the finest existing of archaic Greek gems is an agate scarab of about 500 B.C. in the British Museum, representing a Satyr dancing with a drinking-cup in one hand; though still showing an archaic stiffness, the work is executed with delicacy and spirit. The way in which minute details are brought out, such as the Satyr's tail and beard, and the patterns on the cup and wine-jar at his side, speaks much for the technical skill of the artist; and it is interesting to note how much advance has been made since the island-gems in arranging the design so as to cover all the field. Another very exquisite gem of somewhat later date



# GREEK GEMS

1-3. ISLAND STONES. 4-6. ARCHAIC PERIOD. 7-9, 11. FIFTH CENTURY.  
10, 12. LATER GREEK GEMS



represents a youth testing an arrow. The modelling of the figure and the rendering of the anatomical details are fully worthy of comparison with such a work as the Aegina marbles.

Greek gems of the best period, *i.e.* from about 450 to 300 B.C., are unfortunately very rare in comparison with those both of earlier and later times. Two of the most beautiful in existence are in the British Museum collection, one a burnt carnelian representing a youth playing on a triangular lyre, the other a fragmentary sard with a girl reading from a scroll. Another very lovely one is a sard representing a girl carrying a water-pitcher. It will be noted that all of these are subjects taken from daily life, as is largely the case on the painted vases of the best period. Others reproduce contemporary coin-types, as for instance one with a lion devouring a stag, as on the coins of Velia in Lucania. There are also some fine examples of engraving on gold signet-rings. In the fourth century several fine gems were engraved by an artist named Dexamenos, who has left his signature upon them. Unlike many of the artists' names which occur on gems, these signatures are absolutely trustworthy. In the same century we hear of another artist named Pyrgoteles, who according

to tradition was the only one who was permitted to engrave the head of Alexander the Great.

In the Etruscan tombs of the fifth and fourth centuries large numbers of engraved gems have been found, mostly in the form of the scarab. The subjects are chiefly taken from legends of the Greek heroes, deities being rarely portrayed. The workmanship of the older and better specimens is usually characterised by great minuteness and refinement, and in the style and proportions of the figures the influence of good Greek models is very apparent. In the fourth century they greatly deteriorate in merit, though the same subjects continue to be popular.

After the middle of the fourth century in Greece the practice came in of engraving gems on a thin slice of stone, which was easier to mount, and further indicated that more was thought of the design than of the value of the stone, a point indeed which strikes us as true of the Greeks at all times. It was not until the increase of luxury and magnificence in all the appointments of life among the Romans of the Empire that the most prominent consideration was given (as in modern times) to the stone itself. The designs on

gems of the later Greek period are usually very shallow, with fine, scratchy lines; the favourite materials are sard, carnelian, and chalcedony, especially the former. Many of these gems are hardly to be distinguished from those of the Graeco-Roman period, on which it is not proposed to enter here, the subject being more appropriately discussed under the heading of Roman art.

To conclude this brief sketch it may be worth while to devote a few lines to the technical side of gem-engraving.

The tools used by ancient gem-engravers were three in number—the drill, the wheel, and the diamond-point. The stone was fixed for working in a bed of cement, the tools being freely worked with the hand, which is the exact reverse of the modern practice. The drill was worked by a small bow, the string of which was wound around its stem, as we may actually see depicted on a scarab of the fifth century in the British Museum; it had a bronze tip, and the actual cutting was done with emery-powder mixed with oil, known as *corundum*. In the archaic gems the use of the drill is very conspicuous, especially in the series of close-set holes which reproduce the short, curly hair of men. The use of the wheel is especially

noticeable in the lenticular island-gems ; it was a small bronze disc set on a shaft of metal and worked like the drill with a bow and tube and emery-powder ; its purpose was for cutting lines to connect the points made by the drill or else for broad sunk surfaces. The diamond-point, on the other hand, was used like a pencil, with the hand alone ; it resembles the modern glass-cutting diamond, and was employed for giving an artistic finish to the design, which could of course be best done with the free hand. The use of this tool required great technical skill, the results of which may be clearly seen on two of the best gems in the British Museum collection, the girl with the pitcher already noticed, and a fine fifth-century head of Zeus. In the former the diamond-point has been employed to touch up graceful falling folds of the drapery ; in the latter it has brought out with the most delicate finish the lines of the hair on the head.

## II. GREEK COINS

To do justice to the history of Greek coins even from one point of view, that of their artistic side, is well-nigh impossible in a brief space. All that can be done to justify the

attempt is to trace the outline of their artistic development, touching on a few points of special interest. For Greek coins are in many respects the most fascinating branch of ancient art, their interest being so many-sided, historical, mythological, and æsthetic; and moreover, from the greater facilities for their acquirement, they appeal more than most antiquities to the ordinary amateur.

Greek coins have been described as forming the grammar of Greek art, and this saying is justified by the fact that we have in them a complete and exhaustive series of ancient monuments, absolutely free from restoration or other defects, small in size yet large in treatment, and ranging over the whole period of Greek civilisation from early archaism down to its absorption in the flood of Roman dominion. Their small size is not indeed an advantage in all respects. It would have been contrary to all canons of Greek taste and feeling for form to crowd a composition by introducing more than one or two figures into so confined a space, or to admit any complicated subject, and this of course entails a narrow range of subjects and little scope for varied composition. Moreover it must be remembered that coins were not primarily works of art, like

vases or gems. To the Greek they merely served a utilitarian, *i.e.* commercial, purpose, and if in making a coin he produced a thing of beauty, this was so to speak accidental, due to his instinctive capacity for giving a beautiful form to any object he produced. Thus it should excite no surprise that we find the most beautiful coins not in important cities like Athens or Argos, but in out-of-the-way towns whose single claim to renown is that they have thus enriched our knowledge of Greek art, such as Terina in Southern Italy or Clazomenae in Asia Minor. Did we possess all the other remains of Greek art in complete preservation we should probably ignore the coins altogether; but as things are, our heritage of ancient sculpture is exceedingly fragmentary, that of painting still more so, whereas of Greek coins we have a completer knowledge than any individual ancient could have possessed.

The trifling disadvantages, then, which meet the student of Greek coins are more than outweighed by the many advantages given by this branch of art. In the first place, as compared with sculpture, coins are one and all genuine originals, not copies; they are free from restorations; and they are the work of the actual

masters of the art, rarely deputed by them to workmen or pupils like some of the Greek temple-sculptures. Secondly, there is hardly any question of unreality in their style or of the affected archaism which frequently puzzles the student of vases or terra-cottas, or indeed of sculpture. Hence the canons of style (when once laid down) will always apply for the dating of any given coin. Thirdly, Greek coins have an *official* character which ensures careful choice of types and an absence of caprice or instability in their use. It also of course tended to limit the choice of subjects, heroic legend for instance being largely excluded, but the loss in this way is not great, and there is a gain in other ways, the religious character of many coin-types facilitating allusion to cults and deities of whom we should otherwise know little, such as river-gods and water-nymphs.

Lastly, there is no branch of ancient monuments which lends itself more satisfactorily to scientific classification. It has been said that the main object of any exact and reasoned study of archæology is to determine the place which gave birth to each of the works of art which successively come up for judgment, as well as the time at which that birth took place. It is not too much to say that these two questions

can be answered with certainty and accuracy in regard to almost any coin ; it is far from being so with most works of art. The date of a coin is most satisfactorily determined by any historical indications it may afford ; next by reference to standards of weight ; next by considerations of fabric and technique ; further, by means of its inscription ; and not infrequently, by the circumstances of its discovery, as for instance if it is found in a hoard along with others of more certain date.

The invention of coinage is attributed to various nations, but the choice is practically limited to the Lydians of Asia Minor. Evidence shows that Pheidon of Argos introduced a system of weights and measures in the Peloponnese, but there was an older tradition, supported by Herodotus, that the Lydians were the first who, in his words, "made use of a coinage which they struck in gold or silver and were the first traders." It is most likely, having regard to the abundance of electrum to be found in Asia Minor, that the Lydians were the first to strike coins in this material in the seventh century B.C., and that subsequently the silver coinage was started in the island of Aegina. The latter coins, of which many specimens exist, were stamped with the device

of a tortoise, and were for some time the general circulating medium in many Greek states. The early electrum coins of Lydia were rude oval lumps of metal, stamped on one side only, the other side bearing like most coins of the archaic period merely the impress of the square-headed punch with which they were struck (known as an incuse square).

The methods of striking coins were probably much the same at all times. The usual process was to cast the metal in round, blank pieces, adjusted to the requisite weight; the striking was then achieved by laying the blank on the anvil into which was sunk the lower die (or obverse), and hammering it from above with a bar on the end of which was placed the upper die (or reverse). It was not, however, until the middle of the sixth century that coins were stamped on both sides; previously the incuse square was thought sufficient for the reverse, sometimes varied by diagonal cutting which produced a pattern known as the "mill-sail." When the coin itself was cast, not struck, a model was prepared from which moulds were made and the coin was cast just like a bronze object. The only ancient coins that appear to have been cast are the earlier Italian specimens and a few

others. Specimens of the clay moulds have been preserved, and there is a series in the British Museum used (perhaps by forgers) for producing small silver coins of the later Roman emperors.

The coin-dies were not always engraved by inferior artists. In Magna Graecia and Sicily, on some of the very finest coins, the artist's name appears, which could not have been the case if he had been an ordinary craftsman. The magnificent Syracusan tetradrachms, the most popular, if not really the most beautiful, of all ancient coins, with the head of Persephone wreathed with corn on one side and the victorious chariot on the other, bear the names of Euainetos, Kimon, etc. And that these were artists of renown is shown by the fact that their names appear on the coins of neighbouring cities.

In discussing the types on Greek coins the question arises to what extent they were religious or commercial in their origin and meaning. Apart from the purely utilitarian purpose to which coins were of necessity put, the instinct of the early Greek races for devoting their artistic faculties exclusively to religious ends, might be expected to act similarly in regard to coins. And thus, though the coin

was merely a secular object, a token issued by a civil authority for commercial use, the religious sense of the Greeks led them to consecrate the coins and their uses by placing them under the protection of the special deity of the city. It has even been suggested that originally they were actually struck in temples and issued by the priests, the types being subsequently preserved when the civic authorities took over the rights of coinage. On the other hand, many types appear at first sight purely secular, referring to the staple industry of the city, such as the tunny-fish at Cyzicus and the wine-cup at Naxos. No doubt they subsequently came to possess a commercial signification, like the designs on the postage stamps of some modern states, but it can hardly be doubted that in their origin all such types were religious, and that they stand by an unconscious and unintentional symbolism for the god with whom the inhabitants associated their industries. It was entirely in accordance with the spirit of Greek art to use symbolism of this kind for their deities, without any inner meaning such as medieval or modern symbolism connotes, but merely as a kind of artistic "shorthand" or as the Egyptians used their hieroglyphs.

Some coin-types, again, are obviously purely religious : figures or symbols of deities, mythological subjects, or personifications such as river-gods or water-nymphs. The coins of Athens bear on the one side the head of Athena, on the other her symbols, the owl and olive-branch ; those of Elis, the head of the Olympian Zeus, and his emblems, the eagle and thunder-bolt ; those of Rhodes, the head of the sun-god Helios. At Camarina in Sicily we see an extremely beautiful water-nymph personifying the city ; at Gela, a man-headed bull signifying a river-god.

Others, again, represent the issuing authority, like the later Greek coins with portrait-heads of the kings of Macedon and their successors ; or local activities, many of which belong to what are known as agonistic types. To the latter belong the horsemen of Tarentum, the horses of Thessaly, and the chariot-types of the Syracusan medallions. Others, again, represent local characteristics, such as the silphium (*asafetida*) of Cyrene, the corn of Metapontum, the wild celery of Selinus, or the wine-cup of Naxos. Some, again, are like modern canting heraldry, puns on the names of the places. Thus at Phocaea we find a seal (*phoca*), at Rhodes a rose, and at Melos an apple. Lastly



# GREEK COINS

1-2. AEGINA. 3. POSEIDONIA. 4, 8. ATHENS. 5-6. CRETE. 7. CLAZOMENAE.  
9, 11. TERINA. 10, 13. LEONTINI. 12, 14. SYRACUSE

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there are the historical subjects, such as Taras the founder of Tarentum, or the coin of Demetrius Poliorketes with Victory blowing a trumpet, in reference to his naval victory (see above, p. 96).

We do not as a rule find works of art reproduced in coin-types of a good period, though attempts to imitate famous statues might have been expected. Even the Zeus on the coins of Elis is not certainly influenced by the statue by Pheidias. But the Greek artist could never be a slavish copyist, and to his capacity for infinite variety was also added an instinctive feeling that sculptures on a large scale were ill adapted for coin-types. It is not until we come to the Greek Imperial coins, struck under the Roman emperors, that we find reproductions of old cult statues like the Ephesian Artemis, or other works of art such as the Zeus of Pheidias and the Cnidian Aphrodite. These late coins, though very unattractive in appearance, are often most useful for throwing light on earlier coins or on religious festivals and ceremonies.

In order to indicate the different denominations of coins the types were often ingeniously varied, as is the case with those of Athens, where the four-obol piece has two owls on the

reverse, the three-obol one owl to the front, the two-obol, two owls with one head, and so on. Among the coins of Syracuse the drachma has a single horseman, the double drachm a rider leading a second horse, and the tetradrachm a four-horse chariot; other cities indicate the drachma by a whole animal, the half drachma by the forepart of one only.

Numismatists are generally agreed in classifying Greek coins chronologically in seven periods, a brief account of which may serve to indicate their development and decadence from a purely artistic standpoint.

I. 700-480 B.C. *The Period of Archaic Art*, from the invention of coinage down to the Persian Wars.

The chief characteristics of this period are the occasional use of decorative borders and ornaments (as on the painted vases), and the ingenuity shown in adapting design to space (as on the contemporary gems), so as to cover the whole field. Heraldic groupings of animals and figures running (but in an attitude that looks like kneeling) are common; the animal types by a universal law of early Greek art precede the human figures and are therefore far more common. Monsters are also frequently found; and when the human figure is intro-

duced it is almost always entire, not the head alone. Throughout the treatment may be described as primitive.

II. 480-415 B.C. *Period of Transitional Art*, from the Persian Wars to the Athenian expedition against Sicily.

With the fifth century a period of refinement begins; the Greek conception of grace or *charis* now becomes, as in contemporary sculpture, the guiding principle. Towards the middle of the century this gives way to severe simplicity and a largeness and freedom of treatment, which are no doubt the result of Pheidias' influence. Yet we do not find this advance on the coins of Athens itself, since religious, perhaps also commercial, associations necessitated a rigid adherence to the older style, as in the prize-vases (see p. 199). The best examples of fifth-century coins are perhaps those of Thurii and Syracuse. The human head now comes first into use, and was probably found to be a very convenient design for the circular space.

III. 415-336 B.C. *Period of Finest Art*, from the Sicilian expedition to the accession of Alexander the Great.

The culminating period is reached about B.C. 400, the severe simplicity of the preceding century giving way to a softer but still ideal

and dignified treatment ; this high level is fully maintained down to about 350 B.C. A tendency to realism and picturesqueness is also to be observed, as in the fine coin of Akragas (Agrigentum) with the eagles tearing the hare. The great Syracusan decadrachms and tetradrachms by Euainetos and Kimon are the most celebrated coins of the time, but for real artistic beauty they are hardly superior to an exquisite coin from Terina in South Italy. Among new developments the facing head is now a characteristic feature.

IV. 336-280 B.C. *Period of Later Fine Art*, from the accession of Alexander to the death of Lysimachus.

The chief characteristic of this period is the appearance of portrait-heads of rulers on the coins, due to the political changes which destroyed many of the autonomous states and caused the centralising of art in the large cities. These portraits are usually idealised, but full of individual force and character ; there is, however, in the purely ideal heads a growing tendency to weakness.

V. 280-146 B.C. *Period of Decline of Art*, from the death of Lysimachus to the Roman conquest of Greece.

The work of this period is careless, yet not

without merit, and includes many fine portraits, such as those of Mithradates II. of Pontus. But on the whole the coins are showy, aiming only at a general decorative effect. The influence of Lysippos, of the dramatic Pergamene school, and of its even more theatrical successors, is often apparent.

VI. 146 B.C.—27 B.C. *Period of Continued Decline*, from the Roman Conquest to the Rise of the Roman Empire.

VII. 27 B.C.—A.D. 268. *Period of Graeco-Roman Art*, from Augustus to Gallienus.

The coins of these two periods are mostly devoid of artistic interest, and their chief importance is, as we have seen, historical or antiquarian; the art of portraiture, however, was revived, with some success, under the Roman emperors.

PERIOD.	HISTORY.	ART-CHARACTERISTICS.	SCULPTURE.
PRE-HISTORIC. 2500-900 B.C.	[Supremacy of Crete, 1600-1400.] [Siege of Troy, 1150.] [Dorian Invasion, 1100.]	Bronze Age. Primitive pottery and bronzes. "Mycenaean" art.	Rude idols and votive figures, chiefly in clay.
BEGINNINGS OF ART. 900-600 B.C.	[Homer.] Age of Tyrants and Greek Colonisation.	Homeric works of art. Chest of Kypselos. Primitive sculpture. Oriental influences.	Rude cult-images and <i>xoana</i> . Traditions of early schools of art and inventions.
ARCHAIC. 600-500 B.C.	Croesus. Solon. Peisistratos. Conquest of Ionia by Persia.	Rise of archaic scul- pture. Hieratic and conven- tional "types." Technique imperfect and constrained.	Archaic sculpture be- gins. Dorian and Ionian schools. Asia Minor, Sicily, Argos, Aegina, Athens.
TRANSITIONAL. 500-450 B.C.	Persian Wars (490- 480). Themistocles. Athenian supremacy. Kim'on's rule at Athens (470-460).	Refined and graceful archaic work. Growth of idealism. Monumental works to commemorate his- torical events.	Onatas and Calamis. Myron. Influence of athletics. Aegina pediments. Olympia sculptures.
FINEST ART. 450-400 B.C.	Pericles' rule at Athens (456-427). Peloponnesian War (431-404).	Idealism combined with perfected tech- nique. Monumental works by the great sculptors and painters.	<i>Perfection of sculp- ture.</i> Pheidias and Parthe- non. Other temple-sculp- tures. Polycleitos.
LATE FINE ART. 400-300 B.C.	Spartan and Theban supremacies (404- 338). Demosthenes. Macedonian con- quests. Alexander the Great.	Growth of individual- ism, sentiment, and passion. Rise of portraiture. Technical success tending to oust no- bility of conception.	Praxiteles. — Scopas. Lysippos. Sidon sarcophagi and sepulchral reliefs.
DECADENCE. 300-146 B.C.	Hellenistic Age. Successors of Alex- ander. Pergamene kings. Conquest of Greece by Rome (146).	Decadence of all arts. Decentralising in- fluences. Emotional and pa- thetic subjects.	Schools of Rhodes, Pergamon, and Ephesus. Aphrodite of Melos. Portraits and per- sonifications.

# F GREEK ART

ARCHITECTURE.	PAINTING.	OTHER ARTS.
Lion Gate of Mycenae. Palaces of Knossos and Tiryns. "Cyclopean" walls. Beehive tombs.	Early painted pottery of Thera. Frescoes of Knossos and Tiryns. Mycenaean painted pottery.	Primitive seal-stones. Imported cylinders and scarabs. Elaborate gold-work. The Vaphio cups.
Heræon at Olympia. Use of terra-cotta decoration. Temple at Corinth.	Geometrical pottery. Early Ionic pottery and painting. Corinthian pottery and painting.	Early bronze reliefs. Island gems. Phoenician glass and porcelain imported. Beginning of coinage.
Temples in Italy and Sicily (Doric). Temples at Ephesus and Miletus (Ionic).	Sarcophagi of Clazomenae. Painted tombstones. Black-figured vases. Beginning of red-figured vases.	Hieratic types in terra-cottas. Scarabs and scaraboids.
<i>Perfection of architecture.</i> Temples at Olympia (Zeus) and Aegina. Temple of Athena Nike (about 450).	<i>Perfection of vase-painting.</i> Red-figured cups by Euphronios, etc. Inventions of Kimon in painting.	Terra-cotta archaic reliefs. Fine gems with <i>genre</i> subjects. Coins approach perfection. Fine bronze statuettes.
Parthenon. Temple at Phigaleia. "Theseion" and Erechtheion.	Polygnotos. Monumental decorations. Fine period of red-figured and polychrome vases and beginning of decadence.	<i>Perfection of coins and gems.</i> Athens terra-cottas. Coins of Sicily.
Temple at Tegea. Mausoleum. Temple at Ephesus. Choragic monument at Athens in Corinthian style.	<i>Perfection of painting.</i> Zeuxis and Parrhasios. Apelles. Decadence of vase-painting.	<i>Perfection of terra-cottas.</i> Tanagra statuettes. Bronze mirrors with reliefs. Siris bronzes. Syracusan coins.
Pergamene altar. Temple of Zeus Olympios at Athens.	Rise of landscape and <i>genre</i> -painting. End of vase-painting.	Paramythia bronzes. Terra-cottas of Myrina and Sicily. Coins and cameos with portraits.

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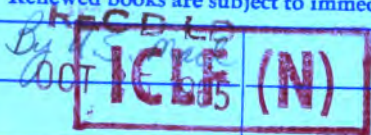






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